



INDEPENDENT

35p
Republic of Ireland 45p

THURSDAY 19 OCTOBER 1995

WINCHESTER
Dea...
page 20

IN SECTION TWO



THE CRACKER
The film that has shocked France

Government lawyer sells off Fred West biography

The Official Solicitor has commissioned a "definitive" biography of Fred West and has provided the author with thousands of pages of police interviews, as well as West's handwritten account of his life.

The author who has been awarded what will undoubtedly prove a literary goldmine is a former *Times* journalist, Geoffrey Wansell, who recently completed a biography of the playwright Terence Rattigan.

The extraordinary and controversial deal was brokered by the literary agency Scott Ferris Associates on behalf of Peter Harris, the Official Solicitor, after a series of highly confidential discussions.

Mr Harris has promised Mr Wansell exclusive access to West's autobiography, said to be entitled *I Only Ever Loved An Angel*, and 13 volumes of transcripts of police interviews with the Gloucester builder. The 100-page memoir is believed to have been unfinished when West, who was charged with the murders of 12 women and girls, hanged himself in Winson Green prison, Birmingham, on New Year's Day.

The book - which seems certain to be one of the best-selling biographies in recent years - will be published by Hodder Headline, "some time next year" after it had a six-figure sum. The account will earn West's children thousands of pounds in advance payments from Hodder, which will be paid as soon as contracts are signed in the next few days.

The Official Solicitor was made administrator of West's estate - including 25 Crownwell Street, the autobiography and the police interviews - because West died intestate with no adult relatives who could become executors. Mr Harris operates on behalf of anyone who dies without a will or relatives who are able to act as executors.

EXCLUSIVE MARIANNE MACDONALD

Under normal intestacy laws, his widow, Rosemary, would be entitled to half the proceeds of his estate. But Mrs West, who is standing trial in Winchester for the murders of 10 women and girls, is understood to have waived her right to these.

Mr Wansell will also be paid a large advance when the contracts are sealed and he and the West children will divide future royalty payments between them after the advance has been earned back in sales.

Alan Brooke, the non-fiction publishing editor at Hodder, said he had been offered seven or eight biographies of West but had chosen to bid for Mr Wansell's because "it was a completely definitive account".

He said he had been given to understand that earnings from the book would only go to West's five children who are under 18 and that his three adult children - who have all sold their stories to newspapers - would not profit from it.

"The proceeds from the book will be going to, as one might say, West's surviving children -

the younger ones - that is why the Official Solicitor has decided to make available what is in effect copyright material," Mr Brooke said yesterday. "He is safeguarding the interests of the children."

But John Linneker, of Taylor Joynson Garrett, the solicitors' firm which acts for the Official Solicitor, said he was unaware of any deal concerning the book which excluded the adult children from the proceeds.

Mr Brooke revealed yesterday that the biography would dwell on "a great deal of detail" which emerged from the police interrogations.

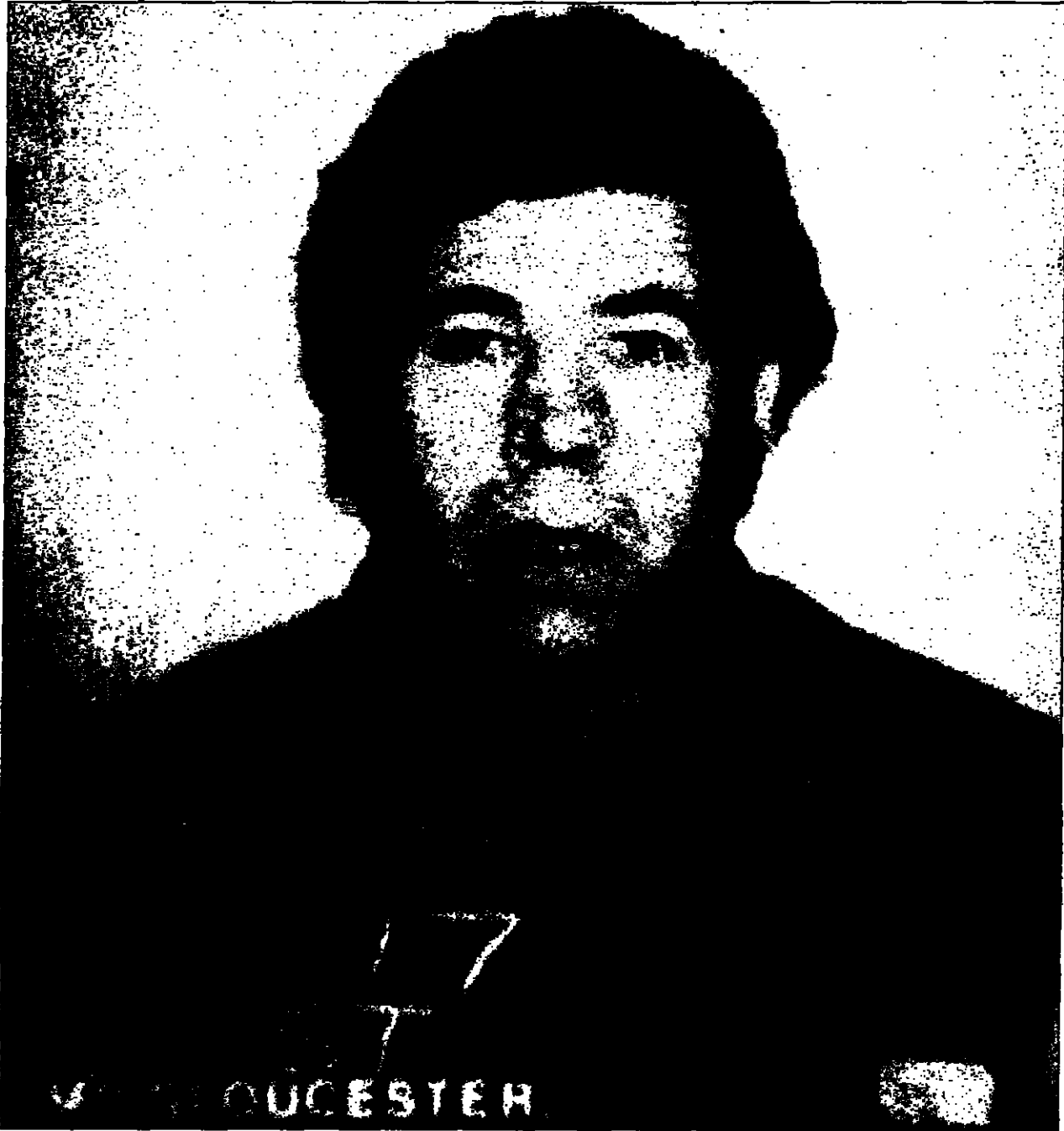
Both the police statements and West's handwritten memoir contained information which would be unknown to the public, particularly with regard to West's activities in Scotland as a young man, he added.

As the effective trustee, Mr Harris is under a duty to West's children to "maximise" the profits from their father's estate. Its prime asset is the so-called West archive including the transcripts of police interviews and the autobiography.

But others are likely to disagree with the Official Solicitor's decision that the West children's financial interest is best served by commissioning an official biography. They argue that a no-holds-barred account of West's life, however scholarly, must increase the already macabre level of interest in his life and affect the future happiness of the children.

Mr Wansell, who lives in Wiltshire, said yesterday that he hoped to finish his biography about nine months after the end of Rosemary West's trial, which he has been attending.

He added: "I think the chance of trying to write a book about West himself is fascinating and I am approaching it with enormous trepidation." He refused to disclose his advance for



By his own hand: Fred West committed suicide after writing 100 pages of his autobiography

Red Rum passes final post

GREG WOOD

Red Rum, the most famous racehorse in Britain, was humanely destroyed yesterday morning after being found distressed in his box. Appropriately, the only horse to win the Grand National three times was later buried in the shadow of the winning post at Aintree racecourse.

Red Rum was 30, an exceptional age for a horse. His racing career began in the mid-1960s, and included a success in a Flat race in the hands of Lester Piggott. But it was when he passed into the care of Ginger McCain, a Southport car-salesman, that his progress towards stardom began.

McCain exercised Red Rum on the beach behind his show-room. In 1973 he won the National for the first time, beating Crisp in one of the most dramatic finishes seen at Aintree. He won again in 1974, finished second in 1975 and 1976, and completed his hat-trick the following year.

In Red Rum's time, the National course was more demanding than it is today. The public recognised his achievement, and Red Rum's popularity endured long after his racing days were over. He was in constant demand to open supermarkets and betting shops. "He's always been brilliant with people," said Phil Harrison, his stable-lad in recent years. "As far as I know, he's never bitten or kicked anyone."

McCain said yesterday: "He was a tremendous old competitor, but much more than that. He'd switched on the Blackpool lights and was chieftain-of-honour at the Highland Games. He was a very remarkable horse, seriously magical." A memorial will be erected over Red Rum's grave in time for the next Grand National.

National treasure, page 28

Sacked prisons chief to sue Howard



Jailer's dozen: Derek Lewis's writ makes 12 allegations

HEATHER MILLS AND DONALD MACINTYRE

Embattled Michael Howard vowed to clear his name last night in the face of a High Court writ from Derek Lewis, the sacked director of the Prison Service, implicitly accusing the Home Secretary of having misled Parliament.

Mr Howard was last night said by aides to be "relishing" the prospect of meeting his critics head on in today's Commons debate, amid signs that he still has strong support among Tory MPs. As part of a concerted effort by Government strategists to deflect the attacks on Mr Howard, Conservative Central Office issued a series of rebuttals of allegations made by the Labour leader Tony Blair and his Home Affairs spokesman Jack Straw.

But Mr Lewis' writ for unlawful dismissal presents the gravest threat to date to the

Home Secretary's career. It flies in the face of Mr Howard's assertion to the Commons that he played no part in the removal of John Marriott, the Parkhurst prison governor, after the escape of three top-security prisoners. And it contains a damning catalogue of 12 alleged incidents of ministerial interference in Prison Service operations and business. They include delaying security improvements and changing them, interfering in staff relations and in prison discipline - and a requirement that Mr Lewis meet Mr Howard and others at the Home Office an average of once a day to discuss operational matters.

Not only has Mr Howard always denied interfering in operational matters, the writ claims that to do so breaches the terms under which the Prison Service Agency was set up.

'It is the Home Secretary's cowardly, dishonourable and dissembling response to the Parkhurst escape which may now prove fatal to him' - *Leading article, page 20*

Mr Lewis is seeking special damages for loss of his £125,000 a year salary under a revised contract which was due to end in September 1996. His combative stance has clearly ended any lucrative severance package that he might have received had he gone quietly.

Within hours of Mr Lewis' bombshell, the increasingly isolated Home Secretary was dealt another embarrassing blow.

Geoffrey Keays, one of the four non-executive members of the Prisons Board, resigned in protest at Mr Lewis' treatment and a second, Urmila Banerjee, said she was considering her position.

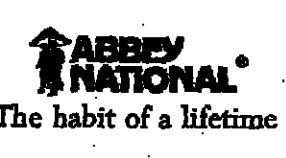
Although Mr Lewis' actions seriously undermine Mr Howard's claim that he bears no responsibility for the Parkhurst debacle and the crisis in the prison service, last night he said his only concern was to get at the truth. "For me it is matter of getting the record straight, clearing the air, and creating the conditions for the operational independence that the Prison Service needs," he told the *Independent*.

But his court action has the potential for far greater damage. Under the rules of disclosure, Mr Lewis could obtain access to the thousands of documents considered by the Lennard Inquiry - many of which are believed to point to ministerial

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WAKE UP TO FRESHER BANKING.

IN BRIEF

Paris to join nuclear ban France, along with Britain and the United States, is to announce that it intends joining the South Pacific nuclear-free zone, committing itself to closing its nuclear testing facilities in Mururoa, though not before it has completed its current cycle of experiments there. *Page 15*

Leeson's bosses questioned Singapore investigators moved swiftly yesterday to interview James Bax and Simon Jones, the senior Baring's executives who supervised disgraced trader Nick Leeson. Their action followed allegations of a cover-up of Leeson's share dealing losses which brought down Barings Bank. *Page 22*

Ohio offers peace Wright-Patterson air force base in Ohio, the planned site of the Bosnian peace talks, bristles with the instruments of air power which did as much as anything to bring the three reluctant participants to the bargaining table. *Page 14*

Jobless fall Unemployment in September showed the largest monthly fall so far this year. The total fell to 2,265,000. *Page 23*

Graf suffers second defeat Steffi Graf, under pressure from a tax-fraud investigation and a chronic back injury, suffered only her second defeat of the year yesterday when she was knocked out of the Brighton international tournament by Mariana de Swardt. *Page 32*



COMMENT

News analysis: Can we love the car and still respect the environment? *Page 19*

Another View: David Trimble writes on arms decommissioning and Irish peace talks. *Page 20*

Hamish McRae: The Sting affair has a lesson for us all. *Page 21*

Andrew Marr takes on his critics over the power of the state. *Page 21*

John Walsh's Diary reveals, exclusively, a very surprising US presidential candidate. *Page 19*

Weather: England and Wales will be dry and bright with sunny spells, but north-western areas will cloud over later. Scotland will be wet and windy. *Section Two, page 29*

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news

Rosemary West trial: Witness tells of 'excruciating pain' during sexual assault by father and stepmother

Daughter 'was abused from age of 8'

WILL BENNETT

Anne Marie Davis told a hushed Winchester Crown Court yesterday how her father, Frederick West, and her stepmother, Rosemary West, repeatedly sexually abused her from the age of eight onwards.

Speaking quietly and often crying, she described how on one occasion she had been strapped to a frame and raped by Mr West and how later she was assaulted by the couple after a friendly night out.

She was told they were helping her future sex life, that she was lucky to have such caring parents and on this type of behaviour went on in all families.

Mrs West, 41, denies murdering 10 girls and young women whose remains were found at 25 Cromwell Street,

Gloucester, and at the couple's previous home in the city, Mr West, who was charged with 12 murders, was found dead in his prison cell on New Year's Day.

Mrs Davis, 31, told the court that she was the daughter of Mr West and his first wife, Rena, but she was brought up by Rosemary West.

She said that when she was about eight her father and stepmother took her down into the cellar at 25 Cromwell Street where Mrs West undressed her.

Mrs Davis said: "I was crying, just asking what is going on? What is happening? And I was told I should be very grateful and I was very lucky that I had such caring parents and they were going to help me make sure that when I got married I would be able to satisfy my

husband. I was struggling... so much that I had my hands bound and I was gagged.

"I remember the excruciating pain. I just wanted the hurt to go away. I also felt I should not be so ungrateful because they were doing this to help me."

Brian Leveson QC, for the prosecution, asked what Mrs West's reaction had been. She replied: "She was laughing and sniggering and joining in and just saying to me it was for my own good and to stop being silly."

Mrs Davis said Mrs West scratched her chest and warned her not to tell anybody what had happened. She told the jury of eight men and four women that later her father brought home a U-shaped metal frame he had made. In the cellar she said she was 'stripped and strapped to the frame and when



Anne Marie Davis in court: An artist's impression

she started screaming she was gagged. Her father had sex with her and Mrs West then sexually abused her.

She said that her stepmother

was present on a number of occasions when Mr West had sex with her.

When she was 13, Mrs Davis said she went out to a pub with her stepmother and they had a sociable evening. Mrs West made her drink barley wine and she was drunk when they left.

Mrs Davis said: "Rosemary said we would be walking home. I started walking. All of a sudden my dad drove up and I was pushed in to the back of the van."

"My father came into the back. He was hitting me and Rosemary was being sarcastic and calling me names and kept hitting me and my father had sexual intercourse with me. She was just laughing. I didn't understand what was happening."

Mrs Davis said that when one of her teachers noticed that she was bruised on one occasion "a

lady from the welfare" came round to 25 Cromwell Street. After she left Mrs West gave her "the biggest hiding" of her life.

She said that Charmaine West, Mr West's first wife's daughter by another man, had antagonised Rosemary West and had refused to cry when she was beaten as she regarded this as a sign of weakness.

Mrs Davis added that when Mrs West told her that Charmaine had gone to live with her mother in Scotland Mr West was in prison at the time. The prosecution alleges that a child's remains found at the West's previous home at 25 Midland Road, Gloucester, are those of Charmaine.

She also said that Mr West had taunted Mrs West about the fact that Shirley Robinson, a lodger at number 25, was ex-

pecting his baby. The remains of Shirley and an unborn child were found at the house.

Mrs Davis continued: "My stepmother was very upset and it was understandable, my father was humiliating her. After that it became very tense in the household. There were a lot of rows between my stepmother and my father."

"I came home from school one day very close to when Shirley's baby was due and I was told that Shirley had gone to Germany." She said that she never saw Shirley again.

Asked about the relationship between her father and stepmother, Mrs Davis said: "I believe they always told each other what they were doing. They had total trust."

Today the jury will visit 25 Cromwell Street.

IN BRIEF

Guy's campaigners lose legal battle

Campaigners yesterday lost their High Court attempt to save Guy's hospital in south London from radical changes they believe will be detrimental to the local community.

They claimed they had been "blatantly denied" the right to proper consultations before a decision to transfer patient and emergency services at Guy's to St Thomas' hospital.

But Mr Justice Laws rejected the application by Southwark Community Health Council, the Save Guy's Campaign and Simon Hughes, the local Liberal Democrat MP, to be allowed to seek a judicial review. He said they had delayed too long in launching their challenge.

Parents win claim

A man cleared of murdering a Scottish teenager has been ordered to pay £50,000 damages to her family. The ruling from the Court of Session came after Joe and Kate Duffy, whose daughter Amanda, 19, was found dead in May 1992 - raised a civil action against Francis Auld, 22, who was freed by the High Court in Glasgow after the criminal case against him was found not proven.

£15m heroin haul

Two Belgians were arrested and police seized 50 kilograms of heroin with a street value of up to £15m - one of the largest hauls uncovered in Britain this year - after stopping a van in Tottenham, north London.

Policeman shot

A police firearms officer underwent surgery at Bristol Royal Infirmary to remove a bullet from his right leg after being accidentally shot in the thigh by a colleague.

Murder acquitted

One of two Asian men accused of murdering Richard Everitt, 15, in a street attack was freed at the Old Bailey. Mrs Justice Steel directed the jury to find Abdul Hat, 20, not guilty of murder and four other charges "as a matter of law".

Baby death inquiry

A consultant anaesthetist has been suspended and an investigation launched after the death of a seven-week-old girl following after a routine operation at a hospital in Dudley, West Midlands.

'Log basket' record

A huge 14th-century bowl which had been used as a makeshift log basket fetched £128,000 when sold at Christie's in London - a record for a Mamluk piece of Egyptian-Syrian metalware from between the 13th and 16th centuries.

Secrecy and stealth of the West deal

Marianne Macdonald explains the background to the selling of a story

It was the literary deal of the decade, and it was brokered with the stealth and secrecy of a military operation.

It was also the deal which jerked Peter Harris, the Official Solicitor, out of the slow-moving legal world and plunged him into the publishing shark-pit which accompanies the sale of a best seller.

For what he had to offer was exclusive access to the story of Fred West's life - a life story which he had spent months writing while confined in Birmingham's Winson Green prison awaiting trial on 12 charges of murdering women and young girls, including his first wife and his daughter.

If that were not enough, Mr Harris also had in his possession the mountain of police transcripts of interviews with West - 13 volumes in all - which revealed unknown details about the man.

The material formed part of West's estate, and had come under the administration of Mr Harris after West died intestate having hanged himself in prison last New Year's Day.

In normal circumstances his widow, Rosemary, would have been appointed executor - but she had also been charged with serial murder and had waived any rights to the estate. Nor could the couple's adult children be given control, because they had sold their stories to national newspapers and so had a conflict of interest when it came to distributing the assets.

Mr Harris was left with the unpleasant task of "maximising" the profits from West's paper goldmine for the benefit of all his eight surviving children.

His solution was to instruct the literary agency Scott Ferris Associates in the spring to secretly sound out possible biographers and suggest appropriate candidates.

By August the agency's two leading figures, Scott Rivers and Gloria Ferris, had come up with a shortlist of about four.

The potential biographers were asked to submit an outline of how they would approach the biography. They were then interviewed by Mr Harris and solicitors from Taylor Joyson Garrett. This secretive selection process resulted in the selection of Wansell, who was deemed most likely to produce a scholarly and unsensational account.

They had their biographer - not the best known, perhaps, but with a number of previous biographies on his CV. The next step was to find a publisher.

Not every publishing firm would be interested. And not every firm would be able to pay a top price. But a handful were approached, among them Hodder Headline.

"I saw an outline of what the book was going to contain which is confidential, but also more importantly the details of the resources that would be going into the book - including the autobiography and interviews with various people," says Alan Brooke, Headline's non-fiction publishing director.

"I also met Geoffrey Wansell when he outlined in more detail what he had discovered from the police interrogations and the handwritten autobiography. It was really that which convinced me it would be the definitive biography."

As a result Hodder Headline put the largest bid on the table - which may not be much under £1m - and were awarded the deal. "The remuneration was a large part of it," concedes John Linneker, the solicitor who attended the author selection meetings.

The biography is expected to be on the bookshelves in the second half of next year. Leading article, page 20



Waiting for eviction: a villager of Holt's Field manor the widest of peace and quiet before the developers move in

Beleaguered hamlet turns back bailiffs

DANNY PENMAN

The residents of a beautiful rural hamlet in South Wales won a brief respite from eviction yesterday when they turned back bailiffs of a property developer which wants to knock down their homes and build an executive housing estate.

Holt's Field, on the Gower peninsula near Swansea, has been the subject of a series of

bitter legal wrangles for the past six years. The hamlet of 27 chalets surrounded by deep woodland has been compared to "Arcadia", the legendary Greek idyll, by one government inspector, and designated a conservation area for representing "a unique part of the nation's built legacy".

But to Elitestone, a property development company, it represents a unique opportunity

to build an exclusive housing estate. The company has bought the land and wants the residents to leave their homes so they can be demolished.

The developer has already been refused planning permission by Swansea City Council. It then lost on appeal to the Welsh Office and the High Court. The council also passed a conservation order on the chalets.

However, the company has won another series of legal wrangles, allowing it to evict the residents as trespassers.

The residents accuse Tim Jones, director of Elitestone and a local solicitor, of acting out of "vindictiveness".

Two bailiffs turned up at midday yesterday to carry out the court order but were met by 150 people from the community and local villages. After much

jostling the bailiffs were let into the centre of the hamlet but some residents prevented them from delivering the eviction notices.

However, the conservation order stops the developer from forcing their way into them or boarding up the homes after eviction, and now the residents are negotiating to buy the land back, possibly with a loan from an ethical investment bank.

BT scraps plans for new regional codes

MARY FAGAN
Industrial Correspondent

Ofel, the telecommunications watchdog, has shelved proposals for a radical overhaul of the nation's telephone numbers, including new regional codes beginning "02".

The proposals sparked sharp criticism from the industry and consumer groups when they

were announced in June, only two months after the Phoneday change which gave numbers an extra "1".

Don Cruickshank, director-general of Ofel, said: "This is not a climbdown. It is just that nobody liked any of the options we could think of."

He said that consultations since June proved that there is insufficient understanding of

consumers needs and those of the industry and that more work needs to be done.

Mr Cruickshank also said that of six cities which could run out of numbers in five years - Cardiff, Belfast, London, Portsmouth, Reading and Southampton - only Reading requires urgent action.

Reading is now to be given a new numbering system with an

"0118" code replacing the existing "01734" in order to increase the available numbers.

The city has three times the average national demand for numbers, partly because it attracts large businesses wanting thousands of direct dial lines for employees. Mr Cruickshank said that, in retrospect, it should have been given the new code at the time of Phoneday when several

other cities were given new codes.

BT, which spent £100m on the Phoneday change in April, had attacked the June proposals as confusing for customers. Yesterday it said it supported Ofel's decision to consult more widely before making sweeping change. The watchdog now hopes to set out options for the future by October next year.

Editor switches to daily beat at the 'Telegraph'

PETER VICTOR

After nearly three weeks of waiting, Charles Moore was finally named editor of the *Daily Telegraph* last night. Dominic Lawson, currently in charge of the *Spectator* magazine, will replace Mr Moore as editor of the Sunday *Telegraph*.

Mr Moore, 38, takes over at the daily paper following the resignation of Max Hastings, who has now moved on to take charge of the *London Evening Standard*.

Mr Moore, who has edited the Sunday title since 1992, was deputy editor of *The Daily Telegraph* for two years and

also spent six years at the helm of *The Spectator*. In a statement, the Telegraph group said: "He was conspicuously successful in all these positions and we are confident that he is uniquely qualified to lead *The Daily Telegraph* to even greater heights of market leadership than it already enjoys."

But most observers believe the time it has taken for the newspaper's board to arrive at Mr Moore has cast a shadow over his appointment. One source confirmed that he was the third choice behind Andrew Neil, former editor of the *Sunday Times*, and Paul Dacre, editor of the *Daily Mail*.

Mr Moore, who is also considered a virulent right-winger, said he was "honoured" to have been offered the job, which he regarded as the best in British newspapers.

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GRAHAM'S PORT

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Never knew the difference between being black or anything until I went to school. Children can be so... A group of them was messing around, chasing one another, when I decided to join in. I caught this girl and she said I couldn't play. When I asked why not she replied "My Mummy said I shouldn't play with blackies." I thought "I'm black!" I was only about eight years old but to this day I can still hear her voice and remember exactly what she said.

Read his autobiography, serialised exclusively in the Independent, from this Saturday

Dispu
remov

The 12 accusations that threaten Howard

HEATHER MILLS
Home Affairs Correspondent

Derek Lewis's writ for unlawful dismissal presents the gravest threat so far to the Home Secretary's career.

Crucially, it flouts the Commons that he played no part in the removal of John Marriott, the Parkhurst prison governor, after the escape of three top-security inmates.

And it contains a potentially devastating catalogue of 12 alleged incidents of ministerial interference in Prison Service operations and business - which Michael Howard has always denied, and which breaches the "Framework Document", under which the Prison Service Agency was set up. They include delaying security improvements and changing them, interfering in staff relations, in prison discipline - and a requirement that Mr Lewis meet Mr Howard once a day to discuss operational matters.

The serving of the writ on Treasury lawyers yesterday coincided with the release of a dossier from Mr Lewis, seeking to discredit the findings of the withering report into prison security by Sir John Larmont, which led to his dismissal on Monday.

In a letter to the Home Secretary, written before his sacking, Mr Lewis claims the report contains numerous inaccuracies, is selective, and could have been more "thorough and complete".

The writ, claiming special damages for breach of his £125,000-a-year rolling contract, states that Mr Lewis met all the key performance targets set for him by Mr Howard, but that any deficiencies in his performance - which he denies - were "substantially caused or contributed to" by the "high level" of wrongful involvement.

The writ alleges Mr Howard failed to provide extra resources needed to avoid delay in carrying out the security improvements recommended by the Woodcock inquiry following last September's escape by the IRA from Whitemoor prison - despite assurances given to the Commons.

In what will almost certainly further damage strained relations between the Home Office and prison officers, it accuses the Home Secretary of requiring Mr Lewis to make "highly critical" public statements of

actions by the Prison Officers' Association.

It also includes claims that Mr Howard delayed the recruitment of a personnel director for the Prison Service, pressured Mr Lewis to increase the severity of internal disciplinary action, required him to delay restructuring area manager arrangements, and refused this summer to allow Mr Lewis to reduce the number of prisons holding Category A prisoners in order to improve security and reduce costs.

But the potential for damage goes even further. A High Court case is likely to circumvent the limitations of the Official Secrets Act, which Mr Lewis signed, and which has prevented him disclosing documents which support his claims.

As well as the specific items listed in his writ, those supporting the former television executive say there are likely to be other matters, which have only so far been hinted at. They will include the controversial transfer of IRA prisoners and the supervision of high-profile prisoners such as Rosemary West and Myra Hindley.

Following the suicide of Fred West, it is alleged that Mr Howard ordered that their cell doors be kept open with an officer outside - an order overturned when governors pointed out they might escape. Labour will pursue this and the removal of John Marriott in what will be a very rocky debate for Mr Howard in the Commons tomorrow.

Crucially, it has the potential to reveal whether the inquiry by Sir John Larmont, which will be at the heart of the breach of contract claim, had been "modified", as those who have rallied to the defence of Mr Lewis have suggested.

Certainly last week's letter to Mr Howard, which seeks to undermine the impact of the Larmont report, suggests that might be the case. The report omits a crucial piece of evidence from Sir Duncan Nichol - one of the Prison Board's non-executive directors - who described the inquiry's view of the Board's distance from the reality of prison life as "a travesty".

In the letter, Mr Lewis claims it was he and his fellow Prisons Board members who were trying to re-focus efforts onto security after years in which both ministers and governors had taken their "eye off the ball".



Open door: Security improvements at Whitemoor were delayed by Mr Howard, the writ claims. Photograph: Edward Webb



Men at war: Michael Howard, left, and Derek Lewis

Director quits Prison Board

JASON BENNETTO

Pressure intensified on the Home Secretary yesterday with the resignation of a member of the Prison Board in protest at the sacking of Derek Lewis. A second board member is considering her position.

The latest blow to Michael Howard's authority came after a tense seven hour meeting of the Prison Board yesterday.

The board, which is comprised of the Prison Service's director general, five full-time directors and four non-executive directors, makes day-to-day operational decisions. It monitors the Prison Service and makes recommendations to the Home Secretary on policy issues. Mr Howard appoints all its members.

Geoffrey Keyes, a non-executive director and a director of the Prudential insurance company, announced yesterday that he was resigning after Mr Howard had failed to respond to his backing of Mr Lewis.

Mr Keyes said in his resignation letter to Richard Tilt, acting director general of the Prison Service: "As you are aware, I believe strongly that it was in the best interest of the service that Derek Lewis remain as director general."

"I am assured that opinion was communicated to the Home Secretary but it was clearly one he did not share. I believe that in the circumstances it is appropriate that I resign from the board."

Another non-executive board member, Millie Banerjee, a BT director, said she was considering resignation and will make a final decision by tomorrow. A third non-executive member, Bill Bentley, a former manager at Shell, said he would not be resigning but expressed support for Mr Lewis.

A Prison Service spokesman reported that Mr Bentley said that he had spent the last five years as a non-executive director and during the past two and a half years had strongly supported Mr Lewis in the major programme of change that he had instituted.

The fourth member of the non-executive team, Sir Duncan Nichol, former chief executive on the NHS, is in Spain and could not attend.

Mr Tilt, who chaired the meeting, expressed his "personal gratitude" and that of the Prison Service for the support given by all the board's non-executive directors.

No statement was issued on behalf of the five executive directors after the meeting, which reconvened last night after a short break.

The five executive directors are Tony Pearson, director of operations north; Alan Walker, operations south; Dr Rosemary Wool, director of health care; Tony Butler, director of services; and David Scott, director of personnel. The position of director of security, which was held by Mr Tilt, who is standing in for Mr Lewis, remains vacant.

Dispute over governor's removal key to the issue

DONALD MACINTYRE
Political Editor

Nothing better illustrates the difficulties of disentangling the rights and wrongs of aftermath of the Parkhurst and Whitemoor escapes than what happened on 10 January. It was on that day that, according to yesterday's writ, Derek Lewis met the Home Secretary and was put under "extreme and unjustified pressure" to suspend John Marriott, the governor of Parkhurst.

"Suspend" for the purposes of the prison service disciplinary code, has a specific and technical meaning. What actually happened to Mr Marriott was that he was moved to another job within the prison service at the agency's London headquarters, as Mr Lewis had wanted. "Suspension" would have meant that he would have been sent home on full pay until such time as the inquiry was completed.

According to Labour sources in touch with Mr Lewis, Mr Howard wanted Mr Marriott suspended and at some point after the meeting it was made clear to Mr Lewis by a senior Home Office official that if he did not do so Mr Lewis's own job might be at risk.

The latest statement issued by Conservative Central Office last night, and cleared by Mr Howard, says bluntly: "The governor was not suspended and Mr Howard did not tell Mr Lewis to suspend him." On whether Mr Howard raised the question of Mr Lewis's suspension, the CCO document is less illuminating. But it points out that he was perfectly entitled to discuss such matters since Prison Service Framework Document says clearly that while "the Home Secretary will not normally become involved in the day to day management... [he] will be expected to be consulted by the Director General on the handling of operational matters which could give rise to grave public or Parliamentary concern".

In the event, as Mr Howard explained to the Commons, he was "removed" from his current post and would not run a prison pending an investigation. Mr Blair referred on Tuesday to the fax which was sent to

The Marriott case: Two versions of events

Evening of January 9: Prison Board and Derek Lewis agree that John Marriott should be removed as governor - but that there will be a sensible hand-over period.
9.30am, January 10: Philippa Drew, director of custody, arrives on Isle of Wight to tell Mr Marriott the news.
At about the same time, there is a meeting between Derek Lewis and the Home Secretary.

At this point, versions of events differ

Lewis's version: He maintains he then came under extreme pressure to suspend Mr Marriott immediately, which he refused. He says he was given a deadline by which to comply otherwise he would be overruled. He did not agree to the suspension. It is suggested that during the interval there were discussion between ministers and chief executives about whether Mr Lewis could be sacked if he did not comply.

1pm: Ms Drew went to Mr Marriott's house for lunch.

2.15pm They returned to Parkhurst and were joined by the joint manager Peter Kitching and a hand-over period of three to four weeks is agreed.

3.34pm: Ms Drew receives a telephone call and is apparently read an extract of Mr Howard's statement to the House which states: "Mr Marriott's immediate removal."

Shortly afterwards, Mr Howard makes the statement to the House, that Mr Marriott would be unlikely to govern a jail again. Home Office sources suggest that the instant removal would be interpreted as a sacking.

Here again, there are two versions of events

Lewis's version: He maintains he had never agreed to an instant removal and the next day issued a statement praising Mr Marriott's contribution to the Prison Service.



John Marriott, governor of Parkhurst, was suspended by the Home Office.

Howard's version: The Home Secretary says he did not tell Mr Lewis that the governor of Parkhurst should be suspended immediately. He did not threaten to instruct Mr Lewis to suspend the governor of Parkhurst. And he did not announce to the House of Commons that afternoon that the governor of Parkhurst had been suspended. Mr Marriott was moved to other duties in the Prison Service.

Philippa Drew, operational director of the Prison Service, on 10 January. There is now general agreement that the fax merely gave Ms Drew the statement which Mr Howard was going to make in the Commons that afternoon, but Mr Howard's critics, briefed by Mr Lewis, say that this followed a disagreement about the terms under which Mr Marriott was to be transferred.

First, Mr Lewis allegedly wanted the word used for the transfer to be "moved" rather

than "removed". Second, he wanted there to be a delay so that the replacement for Mr Marriott could be phased in. Thus the fax, it is alleged, amounted to a summary message that Mr Howard had not acceded to either of these changes and left Ms Drew and Mr Lewis with no alternative but to move him immediately.

One reason why there is still widespread support for Mr Howard on the Tory backbenches - apart from the undoubted enthusiasm they have

for the tough new sentencing measures Mr Howard announced last week in Blackpool - is that most MPs expect him to be answerable for operational matters and frequently question him about them in the House.

But part of Mr Howard's problem is precisely that the more he admits to having been involved in such operational matters the less easy it is for him to pass the buck to the prison service and abrogate responsibility for its failures.

There are also some problems for Mr Howard's opponents as they confront him in today's Commons debate. First, Mr Lewis has yet to produce so far either the fax or any communication from a senior Home Office official which allegedly warned him that his own job was at risk if he did not suspend Mr Marriott - apparently because he is worried that to do so would be in breach of his obligations under the Official Secrets Act.

The other problem is that while part at least of the charge against Mr Howard is that he was less than wholly frank with the Home Affairs Select Committee on 25 January, so too, to judge by what he is now saying, was Mr Lewis.

He made it clear, in terms that now seem pregnant with meaning, that he had not instructed Ms Drew about when to transfer Mr Marriott. But when he was asked by the same select committee whether a politician "interfered with the operational matters on 10 January" and was that why Mr Marriott was treated in the disgraceful way he has been treated, Mr Lewis replied: "No that is not the case." And at an earlier stage of his evidence he said that "it was essential for operational reasons that the change in governor [of Parkhurst] took place immediately..." - rather conflicting with the suggestion that he had fought to delay the transfer.

Finally, there is the point that Mr Blair appeared in his first question in the House on Tuesday to elide the distinction between transfer and suspension. All of this gives Mr Howard some ammunition today. He will need it; it may prove to be the most important Commons speech of his political career.

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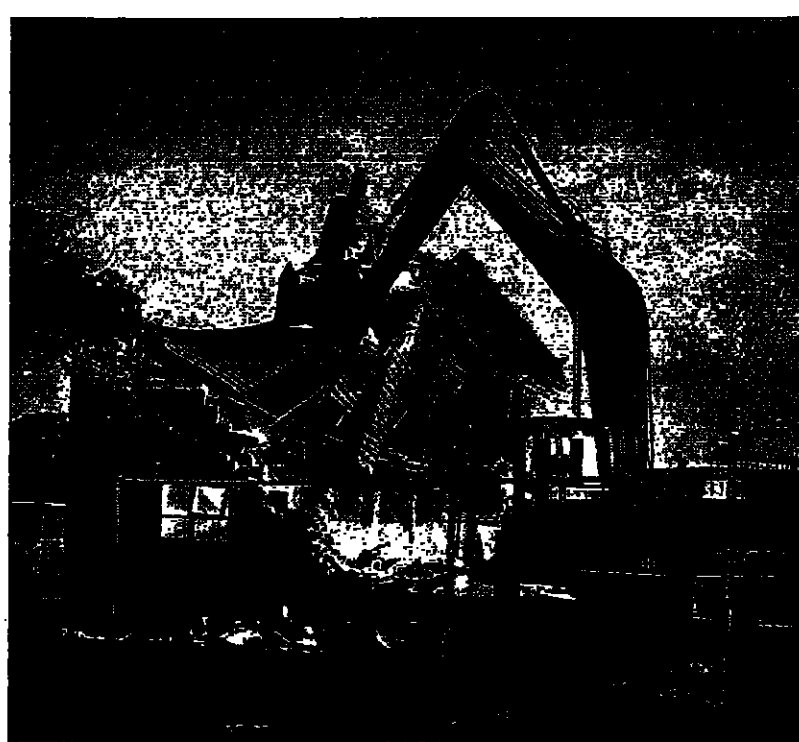
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news

House that William built is reduced to a pile of rubble



Handful of dust: A bulldozer ordered in by Charnwood Borough Council begins the task of demolishing the house (left and centre) owned by William Pickavant and his son, Lester (right)

Photograph: Paul Tonge/Raymonds

The final act in the drama had been a long time coming. For four years the Pickavants had used every legal measure at their disposal to prevent the local authority demolishing their cottage because they lacked planning permission.

But when the end came, it did so swiftly. Father and son were removed at dawn from the home - just outside Wymeswold, Leicestershire, and within three hours it was reduced to a pile of rubble.

Both men, William, 67, and Lester, 34, were arrested for their vain efforts to prevent the council's contractors moving in to do the job that they had been ordered to do themselves three years previously.

Last night Lester Pickavant's girlfriend, Tricia Bloor, who lived at the house with him, accused Charnwood Borough Council of making them homeless, despite making applications earlier this year for permission to carry out the work.

Ian MacKinnon sees the bitter end of a four-year planning dispute

But the authority stoutly defended its decision, saying that from the outset the Pickavants had been advised that they required planning permission, but carried on regardless without it. Building work at Holly Lodge Farm was monitored from the time the bungalow was erected on the site of a previous cottage. Officials at the local authority said in a statement

that they were first led to believe the building was to be a barn. The Pickavants only conceded later that it would be a house, while ignoring advice that they needed planning permission.

In 1992 the authority served an enforcement notice, demanding that William Pickavant, a retired soldier, demolish the house, an order against which he appealed.

But his appeal was rejected at a subsequent public inquiry and he was convicted this year in the crown court of failing to comply with the enforcement notice. The Recorder in the case urged Mr Pickavant to "come to his senses".

Still the Pickavants did not comply with the order and the council said in September that it planned to do the job itself "in

fairness to all those who have been refused planning permission and have abided by the law".

Yesterday morning at 6.15am, officials from the council, accompanied by police, arrived to be met at the front gate by the Pickavants and Miss Bloor.

Police said they were concerned about the possibility of

violence. In another planning row, Albert Dryden shot dead Harry Collinson, a planning officer, in front of television cameras.

Mr Collinson had arrived to supervise the demolition of his cottage, also built without permission.

William Pickavant was released without charge after questioning yesterday. However, his son was still being held last night, pending a decision on whether he should be

charged with a breach of the peace.

But Miss Bloor was angry at the outcome of the dispute. "I cannot believe the world exists with such people. I would never have thought any of this possible. It was a beautiful cottage, lined with oak beams. It was a typical rural home."

"I honestly thought someone would find a compromise to the problem. Where can we go now? Am I just going to have to buy a tent?"

Mackay hits back over divorce Bill

STEPHEN WARD
Legal Affairs Correspondent

Lord Mackay, the Lord Chancellor, yesterday defended his proposed Divorce Reform Bill against those who have said it would weaken the institution of marriage.

Some critics on the right of the Conservative Party are unhappy about plans to abolish the principle under which of one partner is said to be at fault, and about reducing the time for the quickest divorces from two years to one.

The Bill is likely to be put to the Commons on a free vote as a matter of conscience, early in the next session of Parliament, but would only be implemented after a lengthy period of pilot schemes and training of new mediators.

In a speech to a Catholic mediation service, Marriage Care, the Lord Chancellor, a devout Christian, said the law could never save marriages that had

genuinely and irretrievably broken down. "The law, no matter how cleverly and carefully drafted, cannot force couples to live together. It cannot make people love and cherish each other, nor make them help, understand, respect and be tolerant of each other while they are husband and wife."

"Even if divorce were to be outlawed altogether, marriages would still break down and some partners would simply walk away."

"How much worse to leave the future arrangements for finance, property and especially for children unresolved, and for the new relationships into which those who walk away would be apt to enter."

"I am only too aware of the research in this area that indicates the damage to children caused by family conflict."

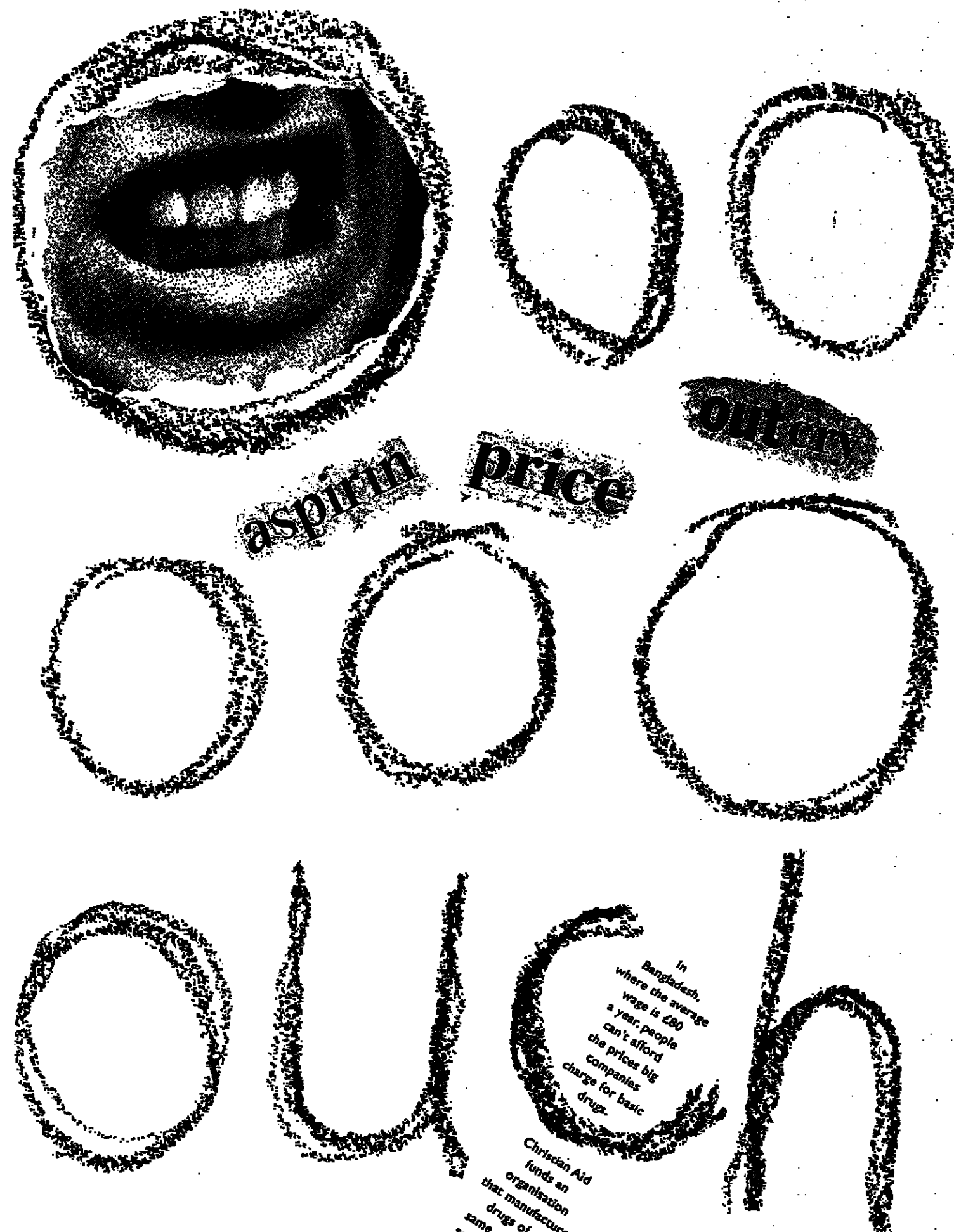
He told his audience, which included Catholic MPs from both parties: "The new system will not involve allegations of

fault, which can cause the couple to come into conflict at the outset. The applicant [for divorce] will be required to file a neutral statement that they believe their marriage has broken down."

He said the intention was that more marriages could be saved by the process, which encourages mediation, rather than encouraging both sides to appoint solicitors who would often turn the process into a confrontation. "I do not believe a marriage is necessarily irretrievable, just because one of the parties has asked for divorce."

"In marriages where communication has been difficult between the couple, such a step may be a means of getting the marriage on the agenda, to make the other partner take the problems seriously."

"This is one of the main reasons underlying my wish to change the current divorce system, in particular, how the divorce starts."



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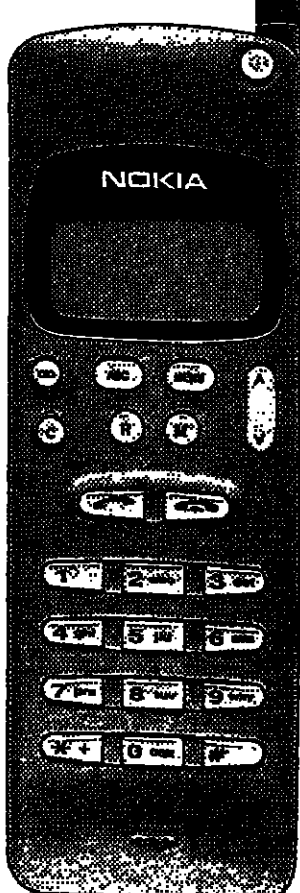
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Dover rallies against French invasion threat

Government sell-off plans could see the tricolour flying over Kent's white cliffs. **James Cusick** reports

It is a moment for which the people of Calais have waited more than 400 years, since their port was last under English rule.

Now the port of Dover faces being bought up by Calais, its Channel counterpart, creating a conflict which may well become known as Le Stink.

That a corner of England might turn French overnight is due to the Government's imminent privatisation plans, which could mean the port of Dover will be put on the open market. Growing expectation that Calais is the most likely buyer has united the Kent town against the sell-off.

Calais was last under English rule between 1347 and 1558, and its loss caused Mary Tudor to pledge that the word Calais would be found carved upon her heart.

Yesterday, passions were running high again. Before the *Sun* newspaper had time to rewrite its famous "Hop off, you Frogs" headline, two Labour MPs were gathering petition signatures in the town centre and handing out leaflets.

"Napoleon (sic) couldn't capture it," pronounced a Labour leaflet. If any opposition had been around, they could have said in their own leaflet: "Labour can't spell Napoleon."

However, there is little opposition to those who want Dover to retain the trust status it has enjoyed since 1606.

"Hitler couldn't destroy it," said another Labour leaflet headline. Before there was time to mention King John in Dover kneeling before Pandulf to surrender England to Pope Innocent III, a Labour messenger arrived with startling news: "Dame Vera's on board, isn't that wonderful?"

Dame Vera Lynn, whose solo battle charge had John Major running scared over his D-Day party plans, may now be the crucial combatant in the dark days of the privatisation battle.

Dover's mayor and the speaker of the ancient Cinque Ports (of which Dover is one) has already resorted to heavy artillery in his opening volleys. The Queen Mother, in her capacity as Warden of the Cinque Ports, has been contacted. "You will know," wrote George Hood, the mayor, in his letter to Clarence

House, "of the long and illustrious history of the port of Dover both in defence of the realm and in providing passage to the continent".

He said yesterday: "We are hoping for a positive response from Her Majesty because as you know she is the Lord Warden and Admiral of the Cinque Ports and Constable of Dover Castle."

It was a busy day for Mr Hood. After fielding inquiries from the local press, he found himself in demand from BBC South East and TTN, and then the French media in the prestigious form of *Le Monde*.

Did he comment on Le Stink? "No. As a politician all I can say is that I have known the mayor of Calais, Monsieur Jean Bartre for 20 years. And I can understand why they would want to buy Dover to safeguard their own business."

Mr Hood said Calais depended on tourism for 70 per cent of its income. "They live off the strength of their port."

Back in the high street, the Labour team was working hard. Mark Watts, MEP for Kent East, said Labour was united in its opposition to the proposal. Rotterdam, Antwerp and Zeebrugge all remained committed to public ownership, he said. It was therefore unthinkable that Dover should be privatised.

The Labour MPs Glenda Jackson and Joan Walley, both transport spokeswomen, said they would fight the Government attempt to "cherry-pick Dover in a short-term exercise designed to provide money for the Treasury and tax cuts". Ms Walley said: "Dover is symbolically England. They are selling off the gateway to this country."

The Port of Dover's Harbour Board said yesterday it wanted the Government to reschedule the privatisation timetable as the effects of the Channel tunnel were yet to be fully resolved. Its chairman, John Molloy, has asked the Secretary of State for Transport, Sir George Young, for "two full years of competition [with the tunnel] in order that the port's future can be less obscure than it is now".

Meanwhile in the town's pubs there was much talk of Winston Churchill, little talk of *La Manche*, and plenty of talk of Le Stink.



Under a cloud: Government privatisation plans, and the possibility that the port will be bought up by Calais, have cast a shadow over Dover's future Photograph: Brian Harris

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Church finds life at Rainbow's end

JOHN MCKIE

The Rainbow Theatre, one of London's most historic venues, has been sold to a mysterious Brazilian religious organisation for £2.35m.

The Rainbow, previously known as the Astoria, in Finsbury Park, also used to be a cinema before it closed in 1981, but was best known as one of Britain's greatest pop music venues.

It played host to The Beatles, David Bowie, Nat King Cole and The Clash, and was the venue where Rod Stewart kicked footballs into the crowd. The late Frank Zappa was attacked on stage by a deranged fan before he escaped to the Isle of Wight festival in 1970. And it was where 6,000 young fans of the Osmond Brothers went on the rampage in 1973 when they discovered that the

2,500 capacity gig had sold out. The Property group Prior Kirschel Properties, which bought the Rainbow last October, yesterday announced it had exchanged contracts with the Universal Church of the Kingdom of God, a Brazilian organisation with bases in 25 countries. The organisation had tried to take over another rock venue, the Brixton Academy, as its British headquarters but it was bought by music promoters. The same promoters had previously been talking with FK about the acquisition and restoration of the Rainbow. The Universal Church, which has been rebuked by the Advertising Standards Authority for claiming its pastors could cure headaches, depression and insomnia - has kept a low profile since its interest in Brixton Academy was announced this summer.

DAILY POEM

Beachcombers

By Robert Nye

Flood-tide rising ebb-tide falling
Drowned the Queen in the bell;
Her heart tolled on the clapper
A toll or two, then fell.
Down where her mind had fallen
Ringing a high-pitched knell.

Columbus locked in his cabin,
Drunk on Atlantic dew;
Dreams of the crucifixion.
Riding at anchor, his crew
Lured after blue dolphins,
Whispered: "The Wandering Jew!"

No angelus no America
Have we to undiscover,
Who both have been beachcombers
Where the lost sea has no lover:
O Sea, run deep below me
As you are high above her.

Robert Nye was born in London in 1939. He left school at 16 and lived for 6 years in a remote cottage in Wales, working on two collections of poetry that won him a Gregory award in 1963. He has been called "the inheritor of a poetic tradition that runs from Donne and Raleigh to Edward Thomas and Robert Graves", with a lyric voice "unlike that of any of his contemporaries". His novel *Falsuff* won the Hawthornden and *Guardian* fiction prizes for 1976, and he has been poetry critic of the *Times* for the last two decades. This poem is taken from *Collected Poems*, published this week by Sinclair-Stevenson at £15.

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M15 files will be open to scrutiny

backbenches". Election to the shadow cabinet does not mean a pay rise. Only the leader of the opposition and its top three whips are paid more than an MP's salary of £33,189. Mr Blair's salary is £62,480 - he declined to take a £1,777 pay rise in January.

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MI5 is currently accountable only to the Home Secretary. There is to be a Bill enabling them to take part in fighting organised crime, but it is not clear how their conduct will be

Of the six latest cases, Mr. Reid upheld four complaints, rejected one, and was forced to drop one for security reasons.



Campaigners marching on Parliament yesterday to highlight the 'grim reality' facing Britain's public libraries. The rally was part of a day of action organised by the Library Association, which is concerned at a lack of resources.

Labour attack on sell-off derailed

Labour's ambivalence over whether and how it would retake control of a privatised rail network undermined the party's attack on the sell-off yesterday in a set-piece Commons debate yesterday.

Three weeks ago trade unions were given what appeared to be a pledge of renationalisation as a sweetener at the start of the Labour Party conference. But in subsequent interviews shadow Cabinet members were unspecific about how ownership would be regained and yesterday the commitment was missing from Labour's motion for the rail privatisation debate.

Quick to exploit the omission, Sir George Young, Secretary of State for Transport, said the dilemma for Labour was not just that it was opposing a policy that was underway, but that its own policy was changing. Tony Blair's "gift" to the trade unions of renationalisation was a "humiliating U-turn", Sir George said. "But no sooner had the Labour leader declared his new policy and had it repeated by Michael Meacher [Labour transport spokesman] than he was backing off it."

Labour silent on renationalisation pledge ■ Pet welfare Bill introduced

"No sooner was the Opposition's timetable published than they had to rush out a supplement," he said, winning a trick with Railtrack's own pulped timetable.

Sir George announced that Britain had secured nearly £7m of European funding towards a

1 April next year, the Government now may actually fail to sell even a single passenger franchise – certainly no more than a tiny handful – by that date.

However, Sir George maintained that privatisation was happening. "Month by month businesses are being put into the private sector." Invitations to tender had been issued for seven franchises – 41 per cent of the total by turnover – and two more were expected to be issued around the turn of the year.

"Serious bids from serious bidders," Sir George said. The first three franchises, to run South West Trains, Tilbury-Southend, and Great Western, are expected to be announced in December.

Some British puppy breeders are exporting animals to the Far East knowing they will be eaten, Tony Banks, Labour MP for Newham NW, said yesterday as he introduced a Pet Animal Welfare Bill. Condemning the "vile practice" of puppy farming, he said it was estimated that across Britain 200,000 dogs were produced each year on farms, often in appalling conditions. Some of the vile people now involved in the trade are now exporting to the Far East, I believe in the certain knowledge that some of the dogs will end up in a pot or on the plate.

His Bill would seek better enforcement by councils of legislation on the conduct and licensing of puppy farms and make it illegal to sell an animal to anyone under the age of 16. The measure had all-party support, but, as Mr Banks observed, at this stage in the parliamentary year it has about as much chance of becoming law as he has "of entering the Kingdom of Heaven or the shadow Cabinet".

Inside Parliament

Steven Goodwin

study of modernisation work for the West Coast mainline. The project has been designated a priority by the Trans-European Railway Network but, according to officials, money for construction work can only be given to private companies.

"I am confident of securing further funding for 1996 and beyond," Sir George said. By then, on the Government's timetable, Railtrack would be in the private sector. Ministers announced in August that plans to include the West Coast service in the first stage of rail privatisation had been dropped. Potential franchise bidders wanted £1bn of modernisation work undertaken first.

Mr Meacher said Labour wanted "not merely a publicly-owned railway but a much better railway". However, despite challenges, he offered no explanation as to why the renationalisation pledge was not in the motion or how it would be paid for.

He said the Government was in "deep trouble" over privatisation, both with investors and the travelling public. "So far from meeting the timetable of selling off half the network by

Tories plan £22m poll 'war chest'

NIGEL COPE

The Conservative Party plans to build up a £22m "war chest" to fight the next general election, a far higher figure than previously forecast. The party has also reduced its troublesome overdraft, which had threatened to undermine its election battle fund.

According to figures released yesterday by Sir Phil Harris, the deputy chairman of the party's board of treasurers, the overdraft is now down to £9.8m, compared to £11.4m when the party published its annual accounts in August. He also said that donations were up by 20 per cent in the six months between March and September. If that rate continues, the overdraft could be reduced to £6m by next year. If the next election is not until 1997 the deficit could be lower still.

Sir Phil, who has built up a near £100m fortune from his carpet business, Carpetright and has been a leading figure in Tory fund-raising said: "People talk about companies stopping donations or switching to Labour but our level of corporate donations is exactly the same as they were five years ago." He added that several new corporate donors had joined the Tory ranks though he declined to name them.

A £22m battle fund would be a similar figure to that spent by the Conservatives on the last election, in 1992. However Labour still has a considerable financial advantage. In August it reported a £4m cash surplus when the Tories were then £15m in debt if loans outstanding to local associations are taken into account.

Several large companies have cut donations to the Conservatives, fuelling talk of a cash crisis. Last week it emerged that two more blue chip companies, engineering group Lucas Industries and the car distributor Ince, had both cancelled their donations. Other corporations that have pulled the plug on Tory donations include Whitbread, drugs group Glaxo Wellcome and United Biscuits.

Graham Kirkham, who heads the DFS Furniture group and who last year made a £4m interest-free loan to the Conservatives, yesterday sold £60m of shares in the company. However, he declined to say whether he would be making a donation.

Although some companies have been warming to Labour, employers yesterday warned that industry is still sceptical about its prospects under a Labour government because Tony Blair could have difficulty delivering his promises.

Dorrell denies rise of two-tier NHS

LIZ HUNT

Stephen Dorrell, Secretary of State for Health, yesterday dismissed the concept of a two-tier health service – with preferential hospital treatment for the patients of fundholding GPs – as a "profoundly wrong" analysis.

Mr Dorrell said the onus was on non-fundholding GPs to demand the same improvements in hospital and community services for their patients.

He told the conference of the National Association of Fundholding Practices, in Harrogate, North Yorkshire: "The role of fundholding is not to allow a two-tier service – it is to reinforce initiative and strengthen commitment to innovation."

There are now more than 10,500 fundholding practices which manage their own budgets and buy packages of hospital care and some community services for their patients. From

April 1996 more than half the population of England will be cared for by GP fundholders. Non-fundholders rely on local health authorities to buy health care services for their patients.

The Independent on Sunday reported that non-emergency surgery for the patients of non-fundholders in Salisbury, Wiltshire, has been cancelled for at least six months because the health authority cannot afford any more care. Patients of GP fundholders are being "fast tracked", giving rise to claims of a two-tier health service.

Mr Dorrell accepted that fundholders had more leverage with hospitals. "Fundholding certainly empowers the GPs in a way that makes it easier for them to improve services available to their patients. But to interpret the process of allowing the emergence of a two-tier service is to ignore the response of other GPs... to demand that improvements are made available to their patients as well."



Goran was one of the first people in the former Yugoslavia to experience the nightmare of racial hatred. He never lived to tell the tale. Or did he?

Somehow you can tell just by looking at Goran that he was unlikely to be a desperado. He worked as an agricultural engineer in the small town of Vukovar, which before the conflict had a multi-ethnic population.

In November 1991, the town was overrun by Serb paramilitaries. Goran and his mother hid with other terrified townsfolk in a large cellar.

But the paramilitaries dragged them out and took them to a 'clearing centre' where people of different religions and ethnic groups were made to stand apart. And where women were separated from the men.

This heartless "selection" was the last time Goran's mother Ivanka saw her son. He was taken away in what was the first mass "disappearance" of former Yugoslavia.

Ivanka prays that her son is still alive and has tried without success to find out what became of him.

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news

Strikes on Merseyside: Green Goddesses stand by as stoppages set to escalate dispute with critical nationwide implications

Firefighters turn up the heat in battle over jobs

BARRIE CLEMENT
Labour Editor

Fidel Castro stares down on the organisers of the two-month-old campaign of industrial action by firefighters on Merseyside. Senior managers believe that the pictorial presence of the Cuban leader is somehow appropriate.

Union officials venture that an apt picture for the office of the fire chiefs might be that of a certain Italian leader with a fondness for uniforms and a yearning for Abyssinia.

The personal enmity between the two sides, however, belies the seriousness of the dispute and the importance of its outcome to Britain's fire service.

Superficially the argument is more of a chip pan fire than a serious conflagration. The Fire Brigades' Union has registered its determination to resist a

management plan to shed 30 jobs out of 1,336 through natural wastage, and to cut annual leave by three days.

Fire authorities all over the country are faced with budgetary constraints and are watching the Merseyside conflict with considerable interest. One senior management source in the North-West has been told that the Home Office "will not allow" management to lose the dispute.

Next year local government is expecting even tougher cuts with the possibility of compulsory redundancies – an eventuality the union has pledged to oppose with a national strike.

On Merseyside the FBU has already staged nine separate stoppages since 17 August: eight strikes of up to nine hours and a day-long walkout which ended at midnight last night.

A more intensive phase of action begins this weekend. There is a strike from 6pm on Friday to 6pm on Saturday and six hours later firefighters walk out again for another 24 hours until midnight on Sunday. Another day-long stoppage starts at 9am on Monday.

A fleet of ageing "Green Goddess" fire engines crewed by Welsh Guards, together with 20 vehicles supplied by the RAF, are standing by.

The strikers are convinced that right is on their side. It is a conviction that seems to have grown since the dispute started. While eight out of 10 firefighters voted for nine-hour strikes, nine in 10 backed an extension of the stoppages to 24 hours. All employees up to and including senior divisional officers have supported the action.

Yesterday 800 Merseyside

firefighters took their argument to the Fire '95 conference in Harrogate for senior officers where they lobbied Home Office minister, Baroness Blatch.

En route to North Yorkshire yesterday, a fire station officer from Aintree said that management would be "back for more" if they agreed to cuts. "We could lose another 100 jobs next year if they win this dispute. It's the thin end of the wedge."

The Labour-controlled fire authority – one of seven such authorities in Britain – believes it is between a rock and a hard place. Councillor Peter Dowd, the authority's chairman, says it has lost around £2m from its budget because of government financial stringency and declining population. The authority needed to save £700,000 and unlike most other fire brigades, which are controlled by county councils, it cannot divert money from elsewhere.

Mr Dowd's relations with the union have been strained. He has offered arbitration but the FBU rejected immediately.

Meanwhile, Merseyside is bracing itself for three 24-hour fire strikes in four days.



Rank and file: Union members applauding a speaker at a rally in Harrogate yesterday

Photograph: Bob Collier

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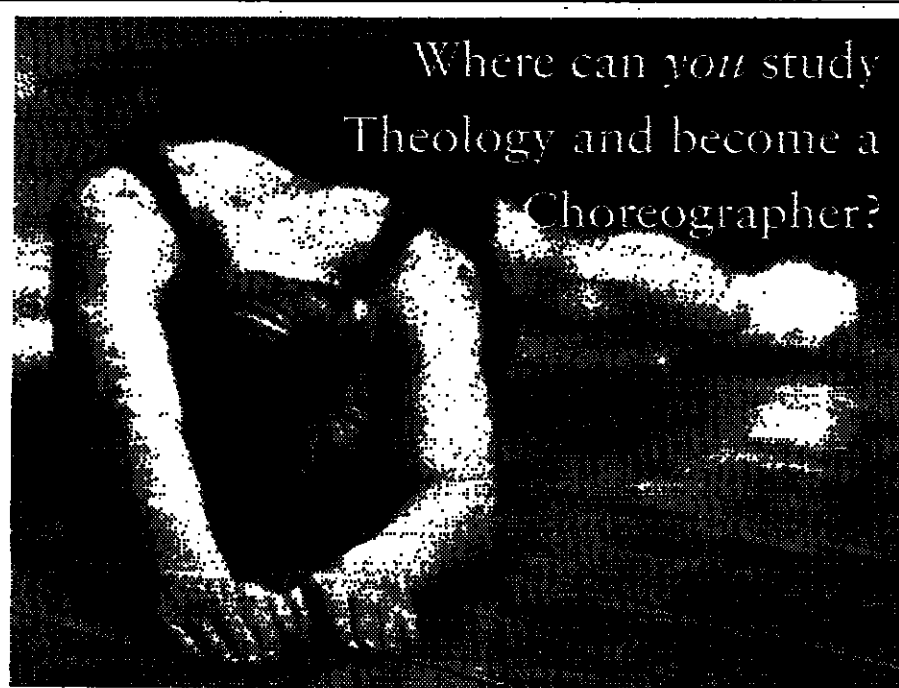
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Spending on lottery 'lower than expected'

GLENDIA COOPER

The National Lottery may have gripped the nation's heart, but not its wallet, the latest survey on family spending revealed yesterday.

The average household spent £2.10 – less than 1 per cent of its weekly expenditure – on the lottery in January to March this year, the Central Statistical Office revealed.

Only a tiny percentage spent more than £5 a week on lottery tickets. Caution seemed justified, with average winnings a miserly 80p, less than half the average weekly stake.

And the idea that the poor spend more of their income on lottery tickets proved to be unfounded, according to the report. Spending ranged from 70p in the poorest tenth of the population to £3 in the third richest group. The most well-off spent £2.80.

As a percentage of expenditure the poorest tenth of the population were spending 0.8 per cent on the lottery. This figure did not alter by more than 0.1 per cent until the top 20 per cent of the population. Even they spend only between 0.5 and 0.7 per cent.

The annual survey, which monitors changes in family spending, showed that in all areas families appear to be keeping a tight rein on spending despite increases in income. While weekly income went up by £17 to £369.30, average weekly spending only went up by £5 to £283.60.

The divide between rich and poor continued to yaw. The poorest fifth of households had an average income of £79 a week, compared with the top 20 per cent, who had an average income of £853.70. One-parent families with one child had an average weekly income of £164.60.

Between 1965 and 1994-5, weekly income from wages and salaries declined from 76 per cent to 64 per cent of total income.

The report's editor, John King, said this was due to an

ageing population, which got most of its income from pensions.

Households with the largest disposable income were in the South East, with an average £543.20 – 42 per cent more than the lowest, regions. Wales (£241.50). Over a fifth of Welsh household income came from social security benefits, compared with a tenth in the South-East.

Expenditure varied greatly with different levels of income. While the highest 10 per cent were spending £625.90 per week, the poorest 10 per cent spent over £500 less than this, at £82.10.

Food, at £50.40 per week, remained the highest weekly expense, except in the South-East and South-West where housing overtook this.

In all areas food and housing accounted for a third of all household expenditure. Northern Ireland spent the largest percentage on food (31.3 per cent) with the South-East spending least.

Mr King said that two consumer durables accurately reflected the income of the households – CD players and dishwashers.

Only 15 per cent of the poorest households own a CD player, whereas nearly three-quarters of the richest 10 per cent do.

Similarly, 2 per cent of the poorest households have a dishwasher, compared with 55 per cent of the richest.

Ownership of telephones has jumped dramatically since 1975 when only 52 per cent possessed one. Now 91 per cent of households possess one.

Video-recorders have also become a must-have item, with fewer than a third owning one in 1985, compared with more than three-quarters last year.

Two-thirds of households now have a car or a van and one in five households have two cars. Half of all households now have a tumble dryer.

Family Spending: A report on the 1994/95 Family Expenditure Survey. HMSO £34.95.

Analysis of average weekly expenditure

by households in the UK 1994-95

Food: £50.40	Northern Ireland: Largest amount of washing machines but lowest proportion of tumble driers.
Housing: £46.40	Scotland: Biggest spenders on spirits and liquors, housing only 4th biggest expense at £4 a week.
Liquor: £15.10	Wales: Lowest weekly expenditure of all regions although spending on tax 5p above UK average.
Services: £26.10	South West: Biggest spenders on postage, highest car ownership.
Miscellaneous: £22.30	South East excluding London: Highest expenditure on pets, hairdressing and beauty treatments.
Alcohol: £12.30	Greater London: Highest spenders on housing, the telephone and bottled water.
Personal Goods: £17.10	East Angles: Lowest spenders on tobacco and alcohol but highest proportion of central heating.
Fuel and Power: £12.30	West Midlands: Expenditure lower than the UK average in all categories.
Transport: £10.80	East Midlands: Spent almost 40 per cent above UK average on motor and cars.
Tobacco: £5.60	Yorkshire & Humbersides: Biggest purchasers of tobacco and over £9 a week spent on beer and cider.
Miscellaneous: £2.30	The North: Spends most on alcohol and smallest expenditure on hairdressing and beauty treatments.
Lottery spending not included as it only covers the quarter Jan-Mar 1995 when it was £2.10 per week.	North West: Biggest spenders on holiday, lowest proportion of central heating.

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'Glaring error' on Brent Spar toxic waste

NICHOLAS SCHOON
Environment Correspondent

Shell's assessment of the toxic, hazardous contents of the Brent Spar was professional and fairly accurate with one glaring exception, an independent certification organisation reported yesterday.

Oslo-based Det Norske Veritas (DNV) confirmed Green-

peace's own estimate of the oil content of Shell's redundant storage buoy was grossly exaggerated because it was based on "obvious misinterpretations". The environmental group admitted the error last month.

The oil company had to abandon sea dumping after Greenpeace's protests inspired a European petrol boycott. The 14,500-tonne Spar is now an-

chored in a Norwegian fjord while Shell works on new disposal plans. DNV was paid £200,000 for its investigation. Shell hired DNV because Greenpeace complained there had been no independent checks before Shell got Government approval to dump the massive structure in deep water. It found Shell may have seriously underestimated the

quantity of polychlorinated biphenyls, PCBs. These are used in electrical equipment and are among the most persistent, toxic non-pesticide chemicals ever mass-produced for peaceful purposes. Their manufacture is now banned. While Shell estimated there were fewer than 20 grams on board, DNV said there could be up to eight kilograms - 400

times as much. PCBs may be in small capacitors fitted to each one of 250 light fittings. DNV said that because it found out about the capacitors fairly late in its inquiry, it was not yet certain whether they did contain PCBs. But given the age of the Spar - 20 years - "that would be the usual thing", said DNV vice president Ole-Andreas Hafnor.

Shell said it would be going back on board next week to check. DNV pointed out that the capacitors could easily be removed for safe disposal. Shell's assessment of the quantities of oil, radioactivity and toxic metals in the Spar were broadly correct, said DNV, one of the world's leading ship certification bodies. It slightly underestimated the levels of

some and overestimated others. The oil company estimated there was a total of 53 tonnes of oil and oily wax in the Spar. DNV said there was 74 to 103 tonnes. Greenpeace's estimate was 5,500 tonnes, but it later admitted that it took samples from the wrong place. Both Shell and Greenpeace welcomed the DNV report and accepted its findings.

Shell said that even if it had underestimated the radioactivity and pollutants in the Spar by a factor of ten, dropping it 7,000 feet on the Atlantic seabed would not have posed a significant environmental threat. But John Wybrew, Shell UK's corporate affairs director, confirmed Shell would not propose sea dumping for obsolete installations again.

Angel spreads her wings in Theatreland

Investors in West End theatre are known as "angels", but rarely do they descend and work a financial miracle as unexpectedly as Donna Knight.

She has rescued one of the year's most acclaimed dramas, which was served with closure notices, is putting it on at a different theatre, plans to buy that venue and hopes to revolutionise the West End.

And until this month no one in British theatre had heard of her.

Donna Knight is putting £40,000 of her own money into staging David Greer's play, *Burning Blue*, at the Ambassadors Theatre. The searing drama about anti-gay prejudice in the American navy was forced to close at the larger Haymarket Theatre. Next week she will have talks with the owners of the Ambassadors, which for sale, about buying the theatre, on the market for £50,000.

Mrs Knight, like David Greer, the author of *Burning Blue*, is a New Yorker, who has moved with her family to London. Her husband runs the London Office of the American dance company Bear Stearns, money the two of them have made. She can now fulfill a dream of championing new writing in the world's best theatre centre for theatre.

A new impresario may revolutionise the West End stage, writes David Lister

At 42, Donna Knight is strikingly elegant, her designer clothes out of the latest editions of *Vogue* making a sharp contrast to the dingy offices at the Ambassadors, where she is supervising the new opening of *Burning Blue* tonight. Her father ran a New Jersey printing company and her mother was a Montessori teacher. After a brief career as an actress, she moved into film production, working at MGM, as PA to one of the company's top moguls, the late David Susskind, and ran a theatre group in New York.

As well as producing plays in London she also intends to make films in Britain.

"My passion is championing new writers," she said yesterday. "I want to work with them over here, develop new works and put them on. I want quality as opposed to commercialism. I'm very sad that producers don't always support quality theatre. Why does theatre in London and New York underestimate the intelligence of the public? "I try to see everything, and love discovering new actors. And the business is so much eas-



Burning ambition: Donna Knight's vision for the future will give a platform to new writers but may be bad news for musicals Photograph: Jane Baker

ier in London than New York. I can put on five plays here for the cost of one play on Broadway. Also the environment is friendlier here and audiences more literate."

Mrs Knight is vague about where the money for her ventures comes from, referring only to "private money, money my husband and I have accumulated over the years, money we have put aside."

Some of that money will now go towards setting up her own film production company. She plans to produce a film by an American writer, possibly starring Hollywood's rising star, Sandra Bullock, but with British actors and technicians.

For now, some of the differences between London and New York theatre still surprise her. One reason *Burning Blue* had to close at the Haymarket, she said, was because of the hot summer and the fact the theatre had no air conditioning. "Every theatre in New York has air conditioning."

If Mrs Knight keeps to her pledge of championing new writing, London theatre could change radically. Janet Holmes A Court, who owns 11 West End theatres, plans to put on more European drama. The pre-eminence of the musical in the West End may be threatened.

Police in £1m raid on 'drugs farm'

JASON BENNETTO
Crime Correspondent

Police raided a secret "drugs farm" hidden in the centre of Manchester yesterday and seized hundreds of extremely powerful cannabis plants known as "skunk weed".

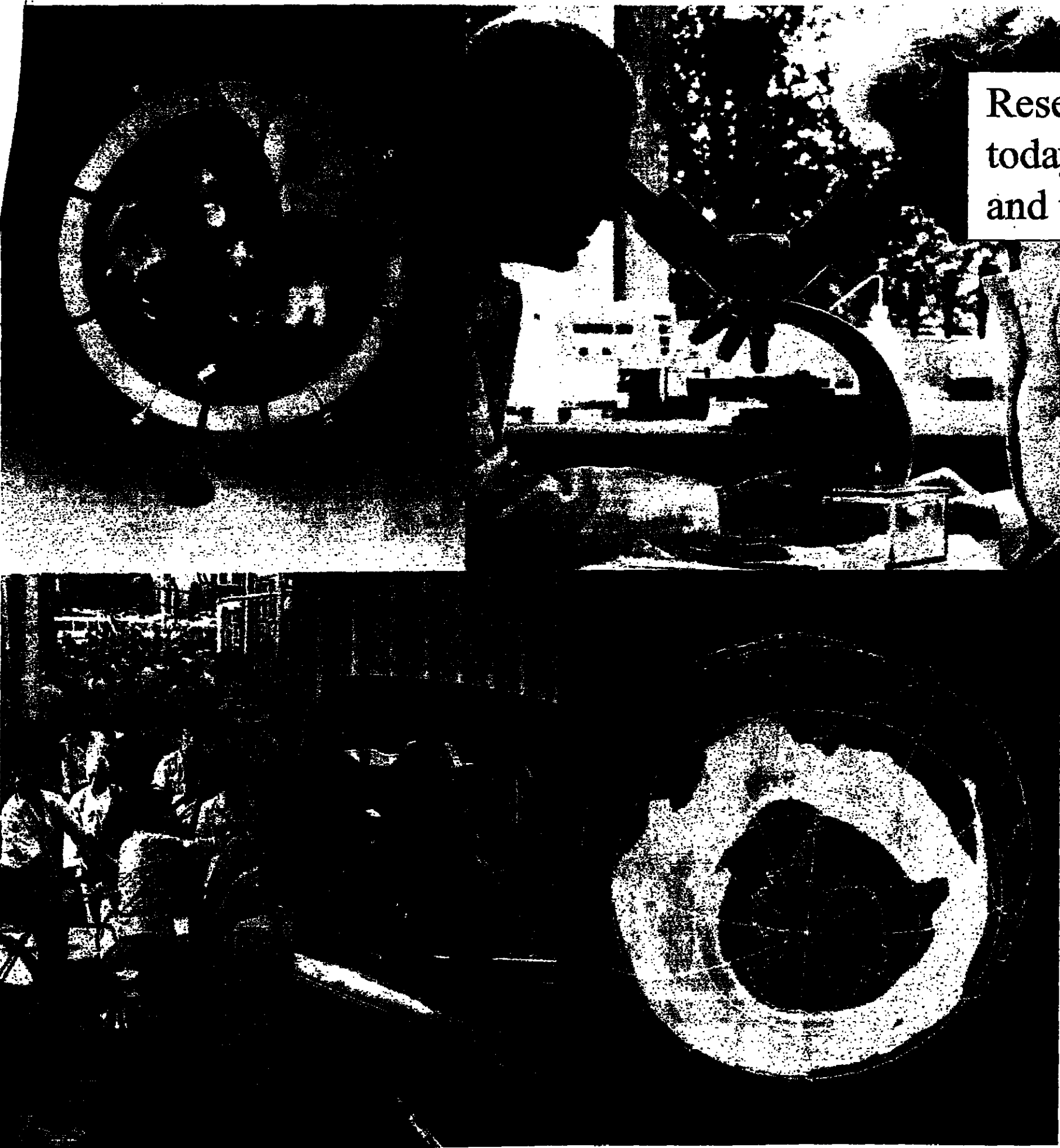
The plants, which detectives claim are worth at least £1m, were being grown in a makeshift greenhouse under plastic sheeting and dozens of fluorescent strip lights inside a derelict warehouse.

Four men were arrested in Manchester after the operation recovered what police believe to be the largest amount of the drug ever found growing in the UK.

The drug, known as "skunk" because of its pungent smell, is much more powerful than normal cannabis and each plant is worth about £1,000.

Also known as "super skunk", most of it is smuggled in from the Netherlands although increasingly it is being grown in Britain. There is a growing demand for the drug because of its potency, a fact identified by dealers who have increased their supplies in recent years.

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Metro blast: Chirac refuses to drop his plans to meet Algerian military leader as rebels threaten France with a 'holy war'

Islamists set price for end to bombings

MARY DEJEVSKY
Paris

The dark shadow of Algeria's civil war fell over France yesterday, as more troops moved on to the streets to reassure a public deeply worried by the prospect of further terrorist attacks. On the day after the eighth bomb in three months, close to the French Foreign Ministry at the Quai d'Orsay underground station, details emerged of a set of demands which established a direct link between French policy towards Algeria and Tuesday's bomb.

An Arabic-language newspaper circulated in France said the Algerian Armed Islamic Group (GIA) had set four conditions for stopping the attacks. Thought to have been communicated about a week ago, they included the cancellation of President Jacques Chirac's controversial meeting with the Algerian leader, Liamine Zeroual, at the UN next week.

The other demands were for

an end to French aid to Algeria, the closure of the French embassy in Algiers and the condemnation of next month's presidential elections in Algeria, in which Mr Zeroual is a candidate.

The Foreign Ministry declined to comment on the conditions, but did not deny their existence. The GIA, regarded as the most extreme of Algeria's Islamic groups, acknowledged two weeks ago that it was behind the bombings. In a message addressed to French leaders, it described its campaign as a jihad, or holy war, against French support for the Algerian regime, and it called on Mr Chirac to convert to Islam.

In the National Assembly on Tuesday, the Prime Minister, Alain Juppé, devoted a whole section of his emergency statement on the latest bombing to relations with Algeria.

"France," he said, "has no intention at all of interfering in the slightest in the internal affairs of Algeria. The President

has accepted the principle of meeting his Algerian counterpart in New York, at the latter's request, to express France's point of view." France "will not allow Algeria's problems to be transferred to French soil... [It] has every intention of continuing its dialogue with Algeria and no atrocity, however dastardly and random, will cause it to be silent".

At yesterday's regular cabinet meeting, Mr Chirac said French policy towards Algeria would not be changed by intimidation and that his meeting in New York should not be seen as "an act of support for anyone".

Despite the appearance of a united front among French leaders, policy towards Algeria is far from clear. The Chirac government inherited an ambiguous policy, which sought to bridge a gulf between "hardliners", led by the Interior Minister, Charles Pasqua, and "pragmatists", led by Mr Juppé, then Foreign Minister.

Mr Pasqua, who has enjoyed

a conspicuous rapprochement with Mr Chirac recently, favoured a degree of support for the military government to counter Islamic extremism. He appeared to hold the paternalistic, ex-colonial view shared by many older people, that Algeria remains a moral responsibility of France. As foreign minister, Mr Juppé seemed

more inclined to treat Algeria as a fully independent country. He also supported the idea of dialogue between Algiers and more moderate Islamic groups. Official policy amounted to continuing economic aid on the grounds that deprivation encouraged fundamentalism. Islamic groups see the aid as support for the regime.

Since he came to office, Mr Chirac has not clarified policy on Algeria, although aid has continued. His traditionalist Gaullism might be thought to align him with Mr Pasqua, and would explain his decision to meet Mr Zeroual. Mr Juppé, however, persisted on Tuesday in his call for dialogue between "all in Algeria" who eschew

violence - in other words, with the moderate Islamic groups (who also object to the Chirac-Zeroual meeting).

Mr Chirac's decision has also provoked opposition in France. The Socialist leader, Lionel Jospin, a former diplomat, said the meeting was "inopportune" and that Mr Chirac ought to have waited until after the

Algerian election. The slier of Mr Chirac's fellow Gaullists has been deafening.

Now the New York meeting has been so directly connected with the GIA attacks in France, Mr Chirac cannot afford to appear to give in to terrorism. For this reason Tuesday's Paris bomb will probably not be the last.



Standing guard: a Paris policeman by the gaping hole in the French train that was bombed in Tuesday's morning rush-hour

Kohl's enemies ready to play anti-EMU card

IMRE KARACS
Bonn

Germany's governing Christian Democrats seem to be the envy of the conservative world. Helmut Kohl, in his 13th year as Chancellor, is riding high in the polls, the economy is sound, and the opposition obligingly tearing itself apart.

As CDU delegates filed out of the hall at the end of their three-day party conference yesterday, they had reason to murmur among themselves that they've never had it so good. But, as some of their leaders have warned this week, their success could yet be their undoing.

In the German political landscape, the spectacular feats of the CDU are matched only by their opponents' disarray. The Social Democrats are so devoid of ideas under their charismatic leader, Rudolf Scharping, that they may be forced to exploit the only issue where Mr Kohl is vulnerable: Europe. At present, the Bonn elite is seemingly united in its commitment to the process of European integration, and Germany, together with France, has traditionally been the locomotive of monetary union.

But as the spectre of the yet unnamed Euro-currency looms larger, fear of losing the beloved mark is beginning to grip Germans.

So far these anxieties have merely generated petitions and measured complaints from eminent citizens. But when Germans go to the polls in three years' time, they will be doing so on the eve of monetary union. Opinion polls are already showing that, while an overwhelming majority of Germans are enthusiastic about European integration, only a minority support a common currency.

This is where the Social Democrats come in. By 1998 they will undoubtedly be under a new leader, but still hamstrung by the seemingly irreversible erosion of their support. Organised labour is in retreat, and the Blairite route of escape to the right is blocked by a successful conservative government. On the left, the SPD is being squeezed by the Greens. In the centre, the Christian Democrats

are infiltrating SPD territory. The temptation to jump on anti-Europe bandwagon will thus be hard to resist.

The Christian Democrats have warned that under management the SPD hit abandon its commitment to monetary union, and soon the mantle of Europe's saviour from a feeble currency. The government's bogymen, he cerebral Oskar Lafontaine, the SPD's candidate for their 1990 election disaster. "Lafontaine... all whip up fears against European currency, just as whipped up fears in 1990 against German unification," warned Wolfgang Schäuble, Kohl's parliamentary deputy.

Mr Lafontaine may soon



Oskar Lafontaine: set to 'whip up fears' for D-mark

a second bite at the cherry. The Social Democrats are trailing 13 points behind Mr Kohl's party, and are facing a string of disastrous regional elections, starting in Berlin on Sunday. The battle to oust Mr Scharping has commenced, with Mr Lafontaine firing the most powerful salvoes. Whoever comes out on top, the outcome spells trouble for Europe.

Even within Mr Kohl's party, a growing number of politicians are raising doubts about the wisdom of allowing foreign governments a role in Germany's obsessive battle against inflation. Yielding to this pressure, the CDU has been forced to insist on strict monetary discipline in the participating countries even after 1999. If the debate turns bitter, and the SPD manages to exploit the divisions, the German locomotive could yet be slowed.

Sack for Holocaust MP

ADRIAN BRIDGE
Central Europe Correspondent

Jörg Haider, the populist politician whose far-right Freedom Party could come to power in Austria's forthcoming election, yesterday dismissed one of his MPs for appearing to cast doubt on the Holocaust.

Mr Haider, who himself once publicly praised Hitler's employment programmes, acted swiftly to defuse the row over comments made by the MP John Gudenus during a television debate. Mr Gudenus refused to answer a question on whether he believed millions of Jews had been gassed to death

under the Nazi regime, saying: "I'll stay out of that one."

The MP's evasiveness put his leader in a quandary. Austrians in general - and Freedom Party supporters in particular - have always had a struggle to acknowledge their complicity in the crimes of the Third Reich, but denial of the Holocaust remains completely taboo.

As his sacking of Mr Gudenus shows, Mr Haider clearly is trying to distance himself from the more extreme elements of his party. The prospect of his inclusion in government at the 17 December poll, however, still fills many Austrians with trepidation.

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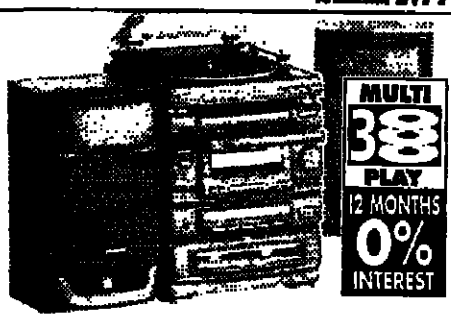
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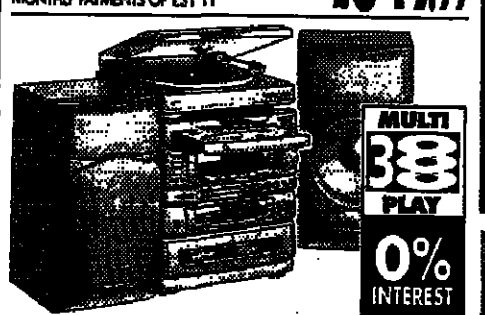
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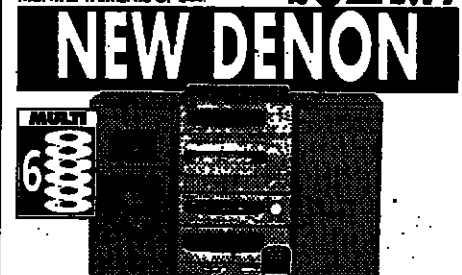
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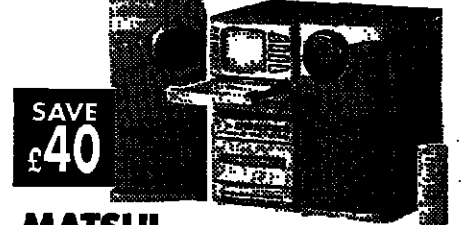
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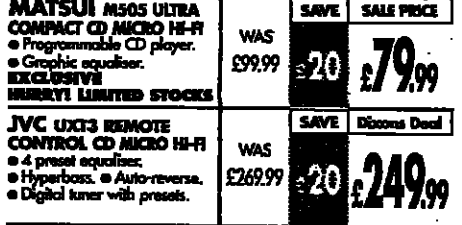
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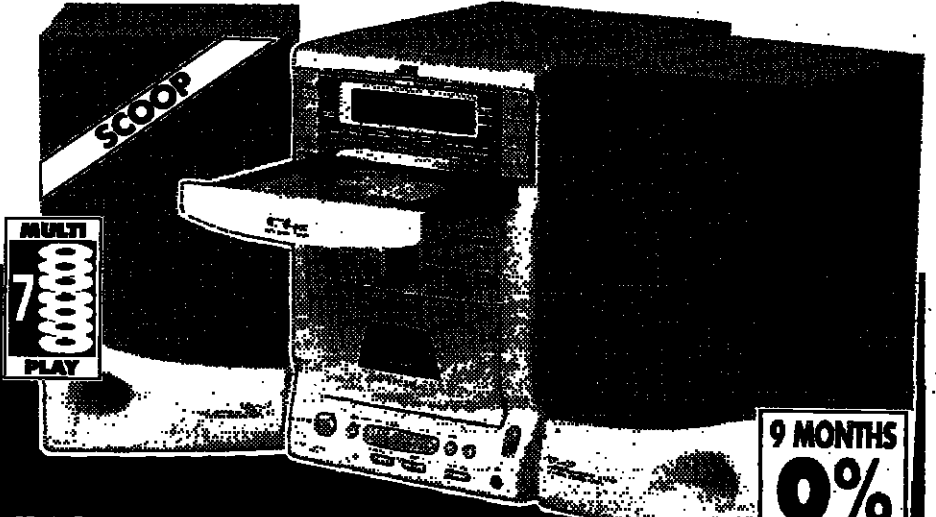
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international

Gaddafi vows to expel a million

Beirut — If the story of Palestine is symbolised by ships — carrying those who wish to live there towards or away from the promised land — then the voyage of the *Countess M* fits rather neatly into the tragic saga.

With 650 Palestinians on board, more than half women and children, the old car ferry was riding the swell five miles off Larnaca last night with its homeless passengers unable to land in Syria but equally unable to return to Libya. As part of Colonel Muammar Gaddafi's latest enforced exodus, the last place they were likely to find shelter was the land their parents and grandparents left in the dying days of the British mandate of Palestine.

To blame for their immediate plight was Col Gaddafi, whose latest promise — to expel a million expatriate workers across the desert if they are not allowed to leave by air — is threatening to diminish even the Palestinian exodus. The United Nations' sanctions committee chairman said last night that the deportation of a million civilians would be a human catastrophe; Col Gaddafi, or course wants the UN sanctions on Libya — imposed because of its alleged role in the Lockerbie bombing — lifted so that international air links with Tripoli and Benghazi can be restored.

The latest victims of the colonel's cynical pragmatism remained uncomplaining on their ship off Larnaca last night, with the port authorities in Cyprus as unwilling to allow them to land as the Syrian immigration officers at Latakia had been a few hours earlier. Driven out of their homes in Libya, the Palestinians on board the *Countess M* were given food and water, while their Greek captain refused to leave Cypri-

Plight of Palestinian refugees would be dwarfed if the latest threat is carried out, writes Robert Fisk



Voyage of despair: Passengers on the 'Countess M'. More than half the deportees, expelled by Libya, are women and children Photograph: AP

ot waters until a port had been found to accept them.

Almost all the refugees hold papers which allow them entry into Syria; their ship had docked in Latakia when immigration authorities decided to send them back on to the vessel and refuse them entry. No word of explanation was forthcoming from Damascus yesterday, although Col Gaddafi's simultaneous announcement of the expulsion of 1 million men may have influenced the Syrians. Why should they, after all, appear to approve of his cruelty by accepting 650 of his victims?

But does the colonel really in-

tend to throw a million people out of Libya? This is the same man who threatened national unity with Egypt and Syria, who predicted the overthrow of the United States, the destruction of the Gulf sheikhdoms, the same man who offered to give his seat on the Arab League to Yitzhak Rabin's government on the grounds that the rest of the Arab world had become allies of Israel. Certainly, Col Gaddafi — once one of the most well-postured and honourable nationalist revolutionaries — is worried about a real revolution, that of the growing

Islamist movement which opposes his deeply corrupt regime. Intelligence sources, quoted in the latest issue of *Thes Thes Ugent*, the French intelligence community's favourite house magazine, believe he was the target of an assassination attempt in Sirte on 17 September, when two men were reported to have opened fire on the Libyan leader when he stepped out of his armoured Toyota. Both were captured by his bodyguards. The shooting followed at least two clashes in Benghazi between Col Gaddafi's security men and Islamist militants. His suspicion that some of the

500,000 Sudanese living in Libya — none of them holding official work-permits — may have been involved, led almost at once to the expulsion of thousands of members of the expatriate community. Hundreds of Palestinians were sent to the Egyptian border and 13,000 Sudanese were trucked south. They were expected to arrive at the Sudanese frontier by the end of this week.

The UN has meanwhile rejected Libya's request to repatriate 1,067,000 "illegal infiltrators" by air. The figure includes not only the half-million Sudanese but 300,000 Cha-

dians, 250,000 men and women from Mali, and others from Nigeria, Niger, Ivory Coast, Benin, Senegal, Ghana, Guinea and Guinea-Bissau. As for the 650 Palestinians off Cyprus, they were visited by a Palestinian diplomat yesterday, while a pregnant passenger was flown by a British military aircraft to Larnaca hospital for the birth of her child. Palestinian authorities are urging Syria to accept the passengers, all of whom have agreed that they cannot return to Libya; the authorities there, they have reported, confiscated both their property and their money.

Ciller's luck sews coalition back together

HUGH POPE
Istanbul

Spirits rose and stock exchange prices soared in Turkey yesterday as the lucky streak of the conservative Prime Minister, Tansu Ciller, saved her from a bruising political crisis.

Mrs Ciller's True Path Party started rebuilding the coalition that broke down on 20 September with Deniz Baykal's social democrat Republican People's Party. The main point of contention was resolved on Monday, when the right-wing police chief of Istanbul resigned.

"I think there will be no problem with the vote of confidence," said Mr Baykal's deputy, Adnan Keskin. Only a few weeks ago he was calling Mrs Ciller a "swindler and a clown". Mr Baykal said he could work with Turkey's first woman prime minister now that "her feet were back on the ground", after parliament rejected her attempt to form a minority government. Their two parties control 223 seats in the 450-seat parliament.

Mr Baykal then flew to Brussels to start work on the most pressing item on the agenda, persuading MEPs to accept a customs union with Turkey on 14 December.

The deal was agreed in March between Ankara and the European Commission. All but one or two laws have been completed in the process of harmonisation between Europe and its neighbour.

Turkey is a rapidly developing state of 65 million people, but its ambition to become a giant has been thwarted. Restrictive laws have jailed about 170 intellectuals and Kurdish nationalism has been repressed. The European Parliament has demanded reforms of the law against terrorism and the release of six Kurdish parliamentarians who were arrested last March.

Mrs Ciller has set her eyes on achieving the customs union. "I feel the responsibility of finalising the customs union as a dagger raised behind my back," she said. "I believe that this partnership [with Mr Baykal] will bring us into customs union."

One reason why Mrs Ciller wants the customs union so much — and why her political rivals seem sometimes to want to torpedo it — is because of the big advantage that victory would give her in general elections due within the next year. Her party has applied to bring the poll forward to 24 December. But there are doubts that Turkey can be ready before next spring, as a new election law must be prepared and the electoral rolls updated. The voting age was recently lowered to 18 and Turks abroad were also given the right to vote.

No party enjoys a big lead in the opinion polls, but continued



Ciller: set on completing customs union with EU

success for Mrs Ciller means she may be able grab votes from her main rival on the right, Mesut Yilmaz, the leader of the Motherland Party. Mr Yilmaz yesterday condemned Mrs Ciller and her husband as the "Yali gang", a reference to the mansion owned by the Cillers; Mr Ciller once headed a state bank that collapsed with huge debts, and his wife made money from property developments.

Court cases against the Cillers have been eclipsed in the public mind by Mrs Ciller's dynamic personality, but neither aspect charms those who favour the simple rhetoric of the Islamists in the Welfare Party, which also is expected to do well in the election. Most commentators, however, believe that relatively good management of the councils they won last year will not easily convert into many more votes for their leader, Necmettin Erbakan.

Saudis behead twelfth woman

Yet another woman — the 12th in less than three years — has been publicly beheaded in Saudi Arabia after a secret trial, writes Robert Fisk.

Bint bin Mohamed Ali, a Nigerian, was executed by sword in a Riyadh market place for allegedly trying to smuggle heroin into the kingdom. Three Nigerian men were charged with her and they, too, have since been decapitated. The four executions — along with that

of a Pakistani man — bring to 191 the number of those who have suffered capital punishment in Saudi Arabia this year.

As usual, neither any details of the alleged crimes, nor the hearings of the Islamic courts which condemned the four, have been disclosed by the Saudi authorities.

Saudi trials are often carried out without defence lawyers, and have, been widely condemned by human rights

groups. A mother and daughter were among the eleven other women beheaded in Saudi Arabia since January 1993.

■ Al-Ain — The Filipino maid Sarah Balabagan, embracing her parents for the first time since escaping execution for the killing of her United Arab Emirates employer, said she was confident of being freed "soon". Ms Balabagan said she would never again leave her country to work, Reuters reports.

Iraq denounces US 'viper' in verse

Baghdad (Reuters) — The Iraqi government's daily newspaper again attacked the US ambassador to the United Nations, Madeleine Albright, yesterday, this time in English verse.

Iraq sees Ms Albright as the main force behind the United Nations sanctions, still in force against Iraq four years after the Gulf war. The Iraqi media often refer to her as "the viper". A 15-stanza poem by the Iraqi poet Ghazay Dira al-Tai,

published in *al-Jumhouriya*, advised Ms Albright: "Before you speak about Iraq, wash out your mouth."

The fourth stanza runs: Albright, your heart is black. But love is white. The facts are bright, But you put off the light. In the middle of the night. Albright, You can't climb the Iraqi palm

Because of its height. Albright, All you say about Iraq Is not right. Iraq is not the house of dark. It is the source of light. The 10th stanza adds: Albright, Before you go to bed, Remember that many thousands Of Iraqi children will become dead Because of the blockade.

Tour De Force

How Sarah and Robert really got motoring in France

When Robert Carter finally finished restoring his MG Roadster, he and wife Sarah immediately began planning the perfect summer holiday: a driving tour of France's wine-producing areas, hotels to be inspired by the Michelin Guide's most mouth-watering recommendations.

But, as Sarah remembers, there was one cloud on her horizon. "I usually end up doing the booking when we go on holiday, but rather than just going into the travel agents, this was going to mean talking

you're actually 'studying' at all. In fact, it wasn't long before we found ourselves exchanging the odd phrase in the car enroute to work. You just listen to what they're saying, then you repeat it, and then, you understand it! By the time we went on holiday, I'd phoned the hotels, arranged the dates and accommodation, and felt really confident."

The final fruits of their efforts came as Sarah and Robert toured the beautiful wine regions of France.

"People kept coming up and asking questions about

so easy to learn another language — and if we can do it, anyone can!

Next year we've decided to take the MG down to Portugal, and we've already sent for

the Linguaphone Portuguese course. Once you know how much more rewarding a holiday is when you can speak the language, you're never going to settle for anything less again."



Making new friends at the Café Bordeaux.

to the hotels themselves. And, as my map-reading's hopeless at the best of times, I was sure we'd end up asking for directions. But my rusty school French would never be up to it, and Robert's was even worse.

Three months before the holiday, the couple looked into night-school classes, but it was impossible to co-ordinate free nights, and, anyway, Robert can't stand classrooms. Sarah was getting more and more anxious until a friend suggested Linguaphone.

"It was brilliant. We could study in our own time, and we found it really easy to put in the half an hour a day they recommend. It's funny, because you don't feel as if

the car... and then, because we could have a proper conversation with them, they'd make all sorts of suggestions about things to see and do which you'd never find just with a guide book. People love it when you try to speak to them in their own language — and we really felt part of things, not just like tourists.

We were even asked to join in a mini wine-festival in one village, which ended up with Robert doing a kind of mad reel with a dozen of the village ladies. It was absolutely hilarious, and we made so many new friends — one couple have invited us to stay with them at Christmas. I never thought it could be



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international

Balkan diplomacy: Belgrade and Sarajevo to exchange liaison offices as ceasefire starts to take hold in the north-west

Serbia and Bosnia take first steps to recognition

EMMA DALY
Sarajevo
CHRISTOPHER BELLAMY
London

The governments of Bosnia and rump Yugoslavia, which comprises Serbia and Montenegro, agreed yesterday to open liaison offices in each other's capitals, a move that should pave the way to full diplomatic recognition.

Future Bosnian elections were also discussed at talks yesterday in Sarajevo and Belgrade, with international mediators emphasising their determination to counter the effects of "ethnic cleansing" and restore a multi-national electorate. The three mediators — the American Richard Holbrooke, Carl Bildt of the European Union and Igor Ivanov of Russia — warned of a tortuous road ahead, but sounded fairly optimistic about the peace talks at the end of the month in the United States.

"The road ahead is very daunting and we are overwhelmed by the tasks ahead of us," Mr Holbrooke said, describing the deal to open liaison offices as "a small step on a difficult and long road". But Mr Bildt, who discussed the elections on Tuesday night with Momcilo Krajisnik, a senior Bosnian Serb official, said he expected a vote within a year.

"We don't want elections that ratify ethnic cleansing," Mr Bildt told reporters. One suggestion is that Bosnian citizens may be entitled to vote by post for representatives in their pre-war districts. But that raises the question of how to get the Bosnian Serb secessionist regime in Pale to agree to a deal that would overturn all its efforts to carve out an ethnically pure state. Under the post-war principles agreed so far, the Serb entity in Bosnia would provide a third of the MPs for a national

parliament: their homogeneity would be seriously compromised if Muslims and Croats expelled from Serb-held lands were able to vote for those MPs.

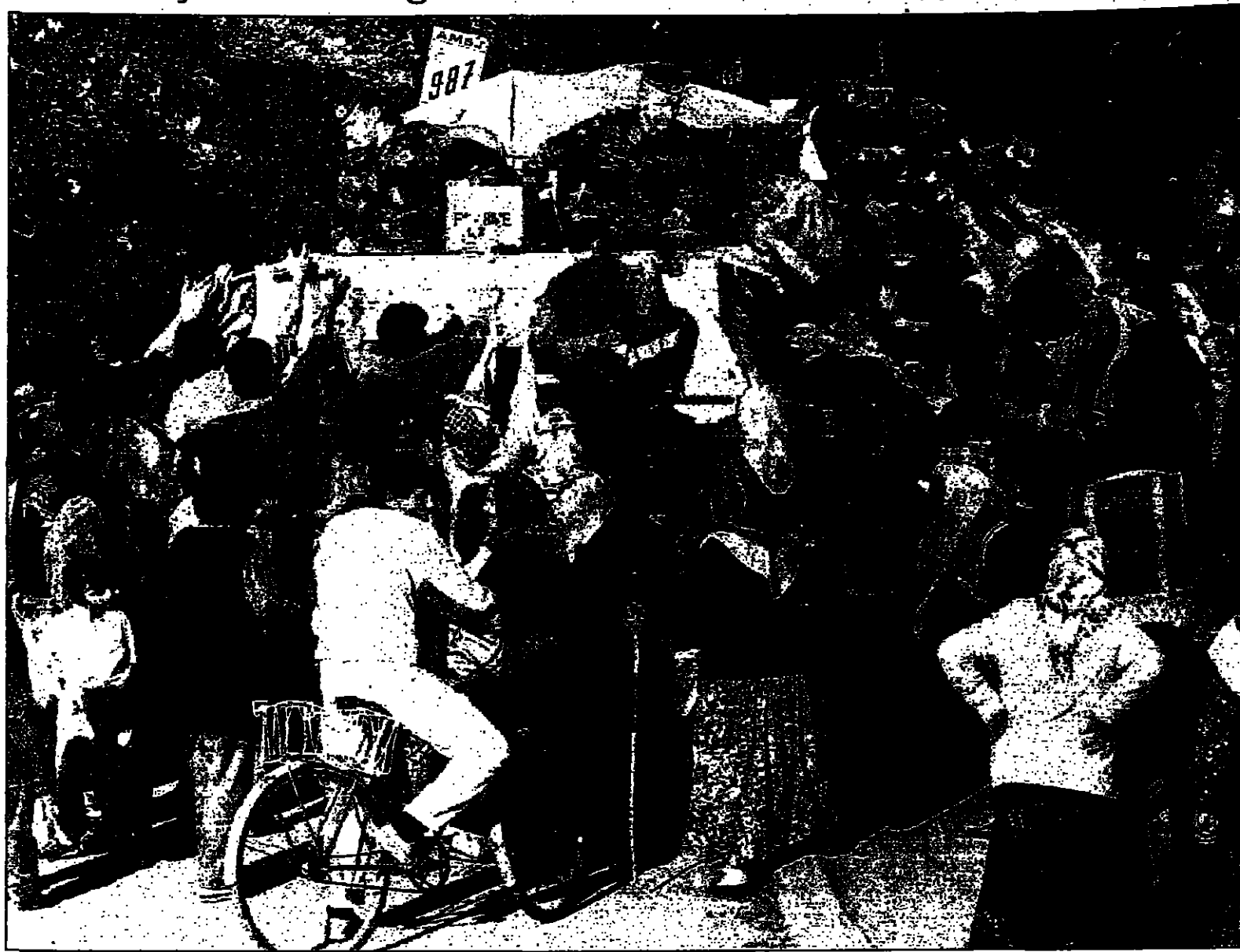
The week-old ceasefire appeared to be holding yesterday, although UN troops have been prevented from getting to the new front line after rapid advances by Croat and Bosnian government troops in the past month, with more atrocities against non-Serbs discovered in their wake.

The UN refugee agency yesterday released a report claiming that more than 100 non-Serb civilians had been killed in Bosanski Novi, in north-west Bosnia, before the Serbs withdrew, and that there had been more rape and murder of non-Serbs in Prijedor. Local sources said the troops responsible belonged to the notorious Serb commander "Arkan".

Bosnian government forces on Tuesday finally gave British peace-keepers access to some of the territory they have gained — but it was a road captured nearly a year ago, and 20 miles south of the new front line.

The British UN forces yesterday sent their first convoy down route "Albatross", the road from Kupres, which was captured by Bosnian-government troops last November, to Bugojno. The UN had hoped to be able to use the route — a third road into central Bosnia — almost immediately, but the Bosnians denied access until they had pushed more than 20 miles to the north.

British UN troops in Bosnia remain infuriated by what they describe as "cat and mouse" tactics used by Bosnian government forces to keep them away from areas now far from the battle lines. The speed of the Croat-Muslim advance in north-west Bosnia has left a vacuum unsupervised by the UN.



Relief: French peace-keepers handing out food in Gorazde after Serbs finally allowed the UN vehicles through

Photograph: Reuters

Ohio base chosen to instil an air of peace

RUPERT CORNWELL
Washington

It does not quite have the class of Camp David. But as a site for the Bosnian peace talks, the Wright-Patterson Air Force base, in western Ohio, is perhaps even more suitable — bristling with the instruments of US air power which, operating under Nato guise, did as much as anything to bring the reluctant participants to the bargaining table in the first place.

In normal times, Wright-Patterson is a sprawling facility home to servicemen and their families, 23,000 in all, best known for its links with the Wright brothers and the world's largest museum of military avi-

ation. But as the Secretary of State, Warren Christopher, announced yesterday, from 31 October it will be where Presidents Milosevic of Serbia, Tudjman of Croatia and Izetbegovic of Bosnia, prodded by 200 aides and diplomats from the Contact Group, will try for a settlement of the Balkan war.

In most respects it fits the bill perfectly. The base, outside Dayton, is big enough to house everyone in ample, secure quarters. It is, by definition, secure and well protected. One hour's flight from Washington and New York, it is easily accessible for important visitors like Mr Christopher, but too far away for an instant dash by a disgruntled negotiator to the net-

work television studios. The ability to keep the press at bay is among Wright-Patterson's greatest charms. It "affords the kind of privacy that is necessary, we believe, to conduct a successful negotiation". Mr Christopher told the House National Security Committee. Apart from a pre-talks tour of the site, and the formal opening ceremony, the media will be kept beyond the perimeter.

A "partial news black-out" will operate, the State Department said, and what briefings there are will be held in Washington. If there is a "Dayton agreement" it will be initialled there and signed formally in Paris a few days later. But, as US officials acknowledge, there is

planned participation of up to 25,000 US ground troops in a Nato peace-keeping force in Bosnia. Despite insistence by the Clinton administration that the force will be strong enough to intimidate any foe, Republicans especially are adamant that Congress be consulted before a final decision is taken.

It would be a "tragic misjudgement" to bypass Congress, Senator John McCain of Arizona said. But Mr Christopher retorted that the President would not be bound by a resolution barring deployment of US troops in Bosnia, noting President Bush's determination to send a far larger force to the Gulf five years ago, whatever the opinion of Congress.

Such apprehensions are shared on Capitol Hill, where misgivings are widespread at the

planned participation of up to 25,000 US ground troops in a Nato peace-keeping force in Bosnia. Despite insistence by the Clinton administration that the force will be strong enough to intimidate any foe, Republicans especially are adamant that Congress be consulted before a final decision is taken.

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Croatia's claims rebuffed by EU

MICHAEL SHERIDAN
Diplomatic Editor

The European Union has rebuffed Croatia by deciding it will receive no future privileges in its dealings with the EU but will be treated the same as other "successor states" to the former Yugoslavia under new "Balkan agreements" with Brussels.

It is a sign that Croatia's human rights violations and authoritarianism have ruined its aspirations to advance towards EU membership ahead of any rival Balkan states. It will cast a shadow over the campaign by President Franjo Tudjman's "free-market" HDZ party for elections on 29 October.

EU-Croatia talks on a trade and co-operation deal were frozen after the Croatian August offensive against Serb rebels, which boosted Mr Tudjman's popularity. The conquest was followed by accounts of looting and murders of Serb civilians. International efforts are now under way to persuade the Croatian leadership to desist from an attack on the Serb redoubt of Eastern Slavonia.

The new policy, formulated in the expectation of an overall peace settlement, is a decisive rejection of Mr Tudjman's assertion that Croatia has a greater claim than its neighbours to represent the values of west European civilisation. It is not clear whether Germany and Austria, Croatia's closest friends in the EU, will continue to argue that Zagreb should receive better treatment than Belgrade or Sarajevo. That argument has already met high-level opposition from negotiators who believe that, unless the EU takes a collective approach, each Balkan state will try to advance itself and block its rivals, creating new tensions.

European Union leaders have therefore been urged to evolve a common set of framework agreements with all the states south of Slovenia and north of Greece. They are: Croatia, Serbia, Montenegro, Bosnia (in its Muslim-Croat and Serb constituents), Albania and Macedonia. The aim is to avoid any impression the old Yugoslavia is being recreated.

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international

French to join nuclear free zone in the Pacific

DAVID USBORNE
New York

Britain, France and the United States are to announce shortly that they are joining the South Pacific nuclear-free zone — once the French nuclear tests at Mururoa Atoll are finished.

It will be seen as an effort by London and Washington to help France to rebuild diplomatic and political bridges in the region, shattered by the resumption of tests last month. Paris will also commit itself to closing its test facilities at Mururoa once it has completed its experiments in May.

All three Western nuclear powers — France, Britain and the US — are expected to pledge adherence to the 1985 Treaty of Rarotonga, which established a nuclear-free zone in the South Pacific.

The announcement, to be made simultaneously in Paris, London and Washington, is likely as early as tomorrow, diplomatic sources in New York confirmed. "It is 99 per cent certain, although there are a couple of wrinkles left to iron out," one European diplomat said.

Suzanna van Moysland of the Verite nuclear non-proliferation pressure group, said: "This is a very positive development for the region. But there is no reason why Britain and the US should not have signed long ago. It is interesting that they are holding back for France."

The timing of the initiative is far from arbitrary. On Saturday, leaders of 150 nations arrive in New York for three days of speeches to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the United Nations. Many feared the event would be marred by protests against the French President, Jacques Chirac.

Britain has been searching for a way to mitigate criticism of its failure to join the condemnation of France. John Major will be asked to explain Britain's low profile at the summit of Commonwealth heads of state and government next month in New Zealand.

By signing protocols attached to the Treaty of Rarotonga, the three countries will commit themselves to its main provisions forbidding the use,

storage, testing or dumping of any nuclear explosive devices in the South Pacific. Russia and China are already signatories. Until now Britain in particular has been hesitant about such a pledge.

Reaction to the announcement among nations that have been most upset by the French tests is not likely to be ecstatic. While announcing its intention to join the treaty, France can still give no indication of when exactly it will put pen to paper. Only at that time will it be obliged to cease using Mururoa for nuclear testing. None the less, until this point France has never given any undertaking to close its Pacific nuclear facilities.

The fact that France and the other Western powers are going to take this amazingly important step should help cool tempers," a European diplomat insisted. Ironically, Australia only yesterday voiced formal disappointment before the UN's General Assembly that the three countries had still not joined the Rarotonga Treaty. The deputy Australian ambassador to the UN, Richard Rowe, said an announcement reversing that stance would mitigate some, but not all, of the ill-feeling against France. "It's good news as far as it goes, but our position still remains that France has got to stop testing."

On the broader issue of testing, the US is pressing for a statement from the nuclear powers setting 30 April 1996 as the deadline for agreeing a final text in the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban talks in Geneva. President Bill Clinton, who may commit his administration to the deadline when he addresses the UN on Sunday, is anxious to accelerate work towards the test ban.

If a text can be settled by the end of April, the way would be clear for final signature in October next year, enabling him to claim credit ahead of the US presidential elections in November. There is scepticism among European officials whether an April deadline is practicable, however. One said that there was a reluctance to appear to be "dragged along by the Americans".



Charm offensive: OJ Simpson (right) preparing to make a putt during the first round of golf he has played since his acquittal. During his round, he stopped to talk to several people and posed for pictures 'with the ladies' Photograph: AP

OJ gets back in golfing swing

Panama City Beach, Florida (AP) — OJ Simpson has made his first public foray since his murder acquittal, playing golf, posing for pictures and signing autographs.

Joking that he had not practised in 17 months — the period of his arrest and trial before being acquitted of murdering his ex-wife Nicole Brown and a friend, Ronald Goldman — Mr Simpson played at the Hombre Golf Club on Tuesday, watched by his girlfriend Paula Barbieri.

"He played pretty good," said Joe Imman — a grounds supervisor, who partnered him during a 10-over par round of 82. While he played, Mr Simpson reportedly missed his daughter Sydney's 10th birthday. She was back home in California, the *New York Post* reported.

Ms Barbieri, whose family lives in the area, watched from a golf cart and left a short time later. Mr Simpson did his best to charm the public. "He took the time and stopped more than once with people on the course," said Mr Imman. "I

guess word got around. They were coming out of their houses. He took pictures with some of the ladies."

Mr Simpson's lawyers claimed he was chipping golf balls in his darkened mansion while the murders took place — an alibi that was ridiculed by prosecutors.

Extracts from the private diary of Ms Brown Simpson, telling of a marriage destroyed by abuse and hatred, were published this week by the *Nation* and *Enquirer*, a weekly tabloid newspaper. Further extracts are promised next week. According to the report, Mr Simpson told his wife to get an abortion when she was two months pregnant with their son Justin and called her "a fat pig" and a "slob".

National Enquirer executive editor Steve Coz said the diary was supplied to the tabloid by "someone who was very concerned about spousal abuse". He said the diary had been authenticated by Ms Brown Simpson's father, Lou Brown, as being written by his daughter.



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IN BRIEF

Swedish deputy PM to be investigated

Stockholm — Sweden's public prosecutor decided yesterday to investigate Mona Sahlin's admitted misuse of an official credit card, but political support for the Deputy Prime Minister grew with a strong endorsement from the Prime Minister, Ingvar Carlsson. "I believe that Mona Sahlin is an unusual and talented politician; she is knowledgeable, capable, strong and courageous," he said. Other ministers said they would not fill the void left by her decision announced on Tuesday night to postpone her bid for the Social Democratic Party's leadership after Mr Carlsson steps down as planned next March. *Reuters*

Commonwealth states attacked over rights

London — In a scathing report ahead of next month's Commonwealth summit, an influential pressure group said yesterday that many of the Commonwealth's 51 member states lacked the political will to respect human rights. The Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative (CHRI) said many governments were paying little attention to the declaration of support for law and order and democracy that they endorsed in Harare in 1991. *Reuters*

Wolf wins retrial

Bonn — Markus Wolf, the East German spy master, scored a legal victory yesterday when Germany's top appeals court overturned his six-year sentence on a 1993 treason conviction and ordered a retrial. The new trial will have to determine whether Wolf sneaked through the Iron Curtain to steal secrets, or limited himself to having his thousands of "moles" in the West do the work. *AP*



'No proof of Claes's guilt'

Brussels — A report by a special Belgian parliamentary commission released yesterday said there was no firm proof of Willy Claes's guilt in a corruption scandal that threatened his career as Nato Secretary-General. Mr Claes has been accused of corruption when he was economics minister in 1988-89. The report will form the basis for a vote by members of parliament today on whether to send Mr Claes to court. *Reuters*

North Korea blamed for breaking truce

Seoul — The United Nations Command backed South Korea yesterday, blaming North Korea for violating a truce agreement by sending out armed infiltrators, one of whom was shot dead by South Korean troops. A second North Korean infiltrator who survived Tuesday's shooting slipped back across the border, Seoul's Defence Ministry said yesterday. *Reuters*

Soldier risks trial over UN uniform

Frankfurt — The US Army said it has charged a 22-year-old medic with disobeying an order for refusing to wear the UN blue beret and patch. His commanding general will decide whether Michael New will face court-martial. Mr New was to have been deployed to Macedonia for peace-keeping duty. *AP*

Call phone boss accused of drug links

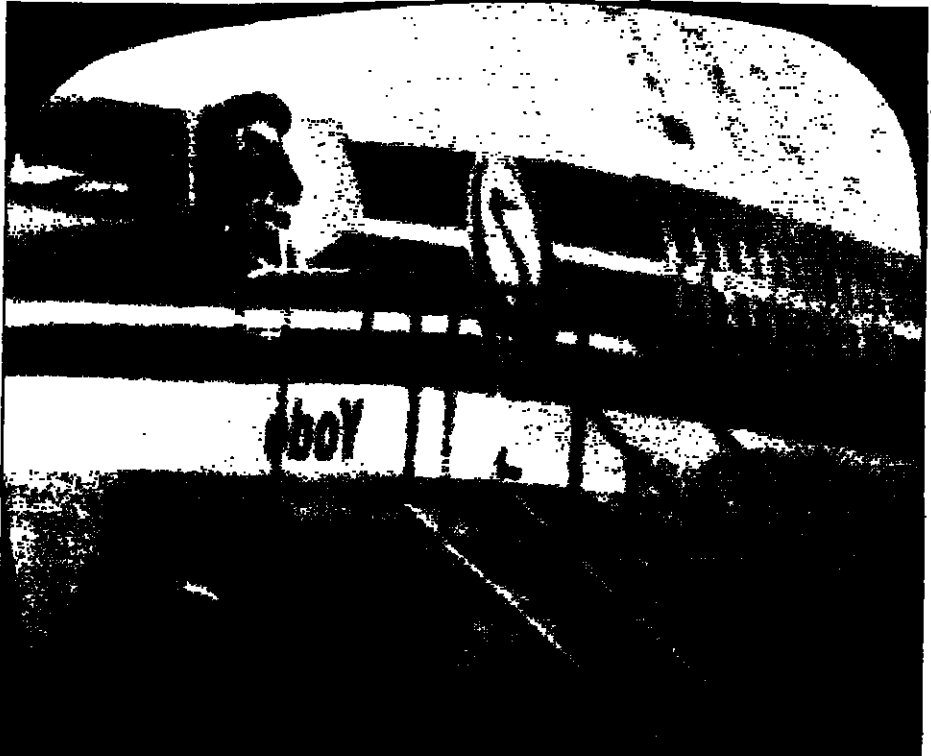
Bogota — The head of Cali's phone company, Edmundo, was in police custody yesterday on suspicion he had tapped phones for drug traffickers. Adolfo Gallon turned himself in Tuesday to police in Cali, home to the world's largest drug syndicate. Police arrested the cartel's alleged communications chief, Gilberto Mora, on suspicion he bugged top officials' phones for the cartel. *AP*



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international

Japanese Red Army terrorists dream of going home



Flashback to 1970: The gang finally reached North Korea, which greeted them as heroes but the welcome is wearing thin and now there is a whiff of nostalgia in the air

Tokyo — "I hope they will be able to visit me in Japan," says Tomoko Konishi. "They're lovely girls, you know. Very nice, decent, normal Japanese girls." The photograph bears her out: in it, Mrs Konishi, 74, stands stiffly with her two granddaughters — pretty, rather earnest-looking teenagers who stare unsmilingly into the camera. But, whatever their grumpy looks, Ritsuko and Yumi Konishi are not your average Japanese schoolgirls. The family reunion she is planning is reopening a 25-year-old controversy about one of Japan's most notorious crimes.

At the centre of the case is Takahiro Konishi, 51, son of Tomoko and father of the two girls. In March 1970, as leader of the Red Army Faction, he led one of the most sensational hijacks in history. Nine student revolutionaries, armed with guns and swords, seized a Japan Airlines jet carrying 138 people. After landing in South Korea, they swapped the passengers and crew for a single hostage: the Japanese deputy minister of transport, who had

Richard Lloyd Parry reports on the dilemmas facing a hijack gang and the children they have fathered in exile

volunteered to take their place. From Seoul they flew to Pyongyang, where they were welcomed by North Korea as heroes and political refugees. The Japanese demanded their repatriation but, lacking diplomatic relations with Pyongyang, they were ignored.

Other Red Army members in Japan were imprisoned for planning the crime but from North Korea almost no news was heard. Then came a remarkable disclosure: three years ago, in an interview with a Japanese newspaper, the late dictator, Kim Il Sung, referred to the hijackers in unflattering terms: "They cannot truly be called revolutionaries, because they live comfortably with their wives and children." The hijackers, it turned out, had Japanese wives, Red Army sympathisers who had smuggled themselves into North Korea via Eastern Europe.

Supporters' groups began visiting Mr Konishi and his

comrades and uncovered new surprises: for years, Pyongyang supported them, but recently, as it made twitchy attempts to attract Western aid, its welcome for the terrorists appears to have cooled. In 1990, the government withdrew financial support. The erstwhile student terrorists now run their own travel agency and import-export business, trading with former Communist states.

But North Korea's economy is in crisis: after summer floods and wretched harvests, there are predictions of famine. Since the death of Kim last year, few observers know who commands power. Understandably, all but one of the hijackers now wish to return to Japan.

The wives are wanted for passport violations; the best that the hijackers themselves can look forward to is long prison sentences. But among them they have fathered 18 children, the eldest Mr Konishi's daughter Ritsuko, 18.

Like all parents, they want the best for them. "The children are Japanese," says Yukio Yamana, of the Salvation Centre, a left-wing group which supports their repatriation, "but all their classmates are Korean. The education they receive is nationalistic, all about 'our glorious mother-country'." In Pyongyang there is just the Kim Il Sung University, Japan has hundreds of universities to choose from. Their grandparents visit them and tell them about Japan: they just want to visit and see what it is like.

At present, the children are stateless. On her recent visit, Mrs Konishi obtained her granddaughters' birth certificates and this month they were submitted to the authorities with the aim of obtaining passports for the sisters. The case is unprecedented and Japan's Byzantine bureaucracy is sure to take a good deal of time reaching a decision. But Mr Yamana is confident that all the

hijackers' children will eventually return to Japan.

What awaits them when they do? Quite apart from the inevitable suspicion that they are spies, Japanese society is notoriously intolerant of former exiles. Even children who have grown up in Europe or America often face bullying and alienation when they return to Japan.

There is a tendency, too, to project the sins of the fathers on to succeeding generations. The children of another public enemy — Shoko Asahara, guru of the Aum Shinri Kyo sect, suspected of the sarin-gas attack on the Tokyo subway in March — are facing this problem in their home town, where suspicious parents are resisting attempts to enroll them in the local school.

As a family, the Konishis can live together only in North Korea. "Unless they can all come back together, it cannot be a homecoming in the real sense," says Mrs Konishi. "My granddaughters are innocent, but I expect a lot of difficulties ahead."

Honey moon over in US trade talks with China

TERESA POOLE
Peking

Fourteen months ago, the US Secretary of Commerce, Ron Brown, bounded on to the stage in Peking waving a list of nearly \$6bn (£4bn) of new deals for American companies, trumpeting a new era of "commercial diplomacy" and patting himself on the back for China's decision to resume the bilateral human rights dialogue.

That was then. Yesterday it was a more sober Mr Brown who admitted that Sino-US official contacts "cannot be expected to produce instant results". There were no photo-opportunity contract signings, perhaps because it has emerged this week that more than \$5bn of last year's "deals" have yet to be consummated. There was no indication that China had offered Mr Brown any firm commitments to open its markets, or to adhere to this year's



Ron Brown: Frustrated by 'lack of progress' in China

anti-piracy pact. There was no sign of the US trade deficit with China levelling off. Nor has the supposed human rights dialogue produced any tangible results over the past year.

Such are the realities for a US official on his or her second visit to China. But Mr Brown is the highest-level American official to come to Peking since June, when the Taiwanese President, Lee Teng-hui, visited the US, scuppering Sino-US relations. So the Secretary of Commerce was anxious yesterday to set a constructive tone for next Tuesday's meeting in New York between President Bill Clinton and his Chinese counterpart, Jiang Zemin. "The centrality of this relationship and our absolute

commitment to making it work is often easy to lose amid the stories about week-to-week problems," Mr Brown told the American Chamber of Commerce in Peking.

In his meeting with President Jiang yesterday, Mr Brown delivered a message which, he said, "clearly indicates President Clinton's view of the importance of the relationship". Talking to Associated Press after the meeting, Mr Brown was upbeat: "I came at a time when if there was continued extension of tension in our relationship the Chinese would have had the opportunity to communicate it to me, and they didn't."

Despite Mr Brown's optimism, most of the traditional points of friction will still be on the table next week when the two presidents meet. Lee Sands, the assistant trade representative, warned earlier this month that the US expected its trade deficit with China to reach \$38bn this year, and as much as \$50bn next year. Mr Brown refused to make his own forecast, but admitted: "The trade deficit is too high."

Mr Brown said he was lobbying hard during this visit for up to \$20bn of contracts for which American firms were bidding against international competition. But the update on last year's deals was less than overwhelming. "We too are frustrated by the lack of progress.... Not a single major private power project has come to fruition in China. Not one."

Apart from obstructive Chinese bureaucracy, the main stumbling block has been financing and the issue of whether Peking will guarantee project debt raised by the provinces. Mr Brown said he had been assured by Chinese officials that the US projects "are moving through the process".

Peking, for its part, accuses the US of blocking its application to join the World Trade Organisation (WTO). Entry to the WTO has become the most powerful tool for the US to force open China's market, and yesterday Mr Brown repeated that China's entry must be "on commercial terms".

In a positive sign for Peking he added: "It is hard to conceive of a WTO in 1996 that does not include China."

Deng's would-be heir shows military muscle

Peking (Reuters) — The Chinese Communist Party chief Jiang Zemin was shown on television yesterday presiding over dramatic naval exercises — including rocket firings and marine landings — with his new military command huddled around him.

The state broadcast appeared to be designed to show Mr Jiang commanding absolute support in the People's Liberation Army, seen as crucial to his bid to succeed Deng Xiaoping, now 91, as China's leader. It also sent a clear message to Taiwan, quoting soldiers as vowing, under Mr Jiang, to "safeguard the reunification of the motherland" — that is, to return the Nationalist-ruled

island to mainland control.

Mr Jiang's display of military clout came less than a week before his 24 October summit with President Bill Clinton and his address to the United Nations the same day. The exercise could touch off new criticism from China's neighbours, who fear the military ambitions of an economically resurgent and well-armed Asian superpower.

"Comrades, how bitterly you struggle!" Mr Jiang shouted through loudspeakers to sailors. "Serve the people!" the crew responded in unison to Mr Jiang, who commands the armed forces as chairman of the Communist Party's Central Military Commission.

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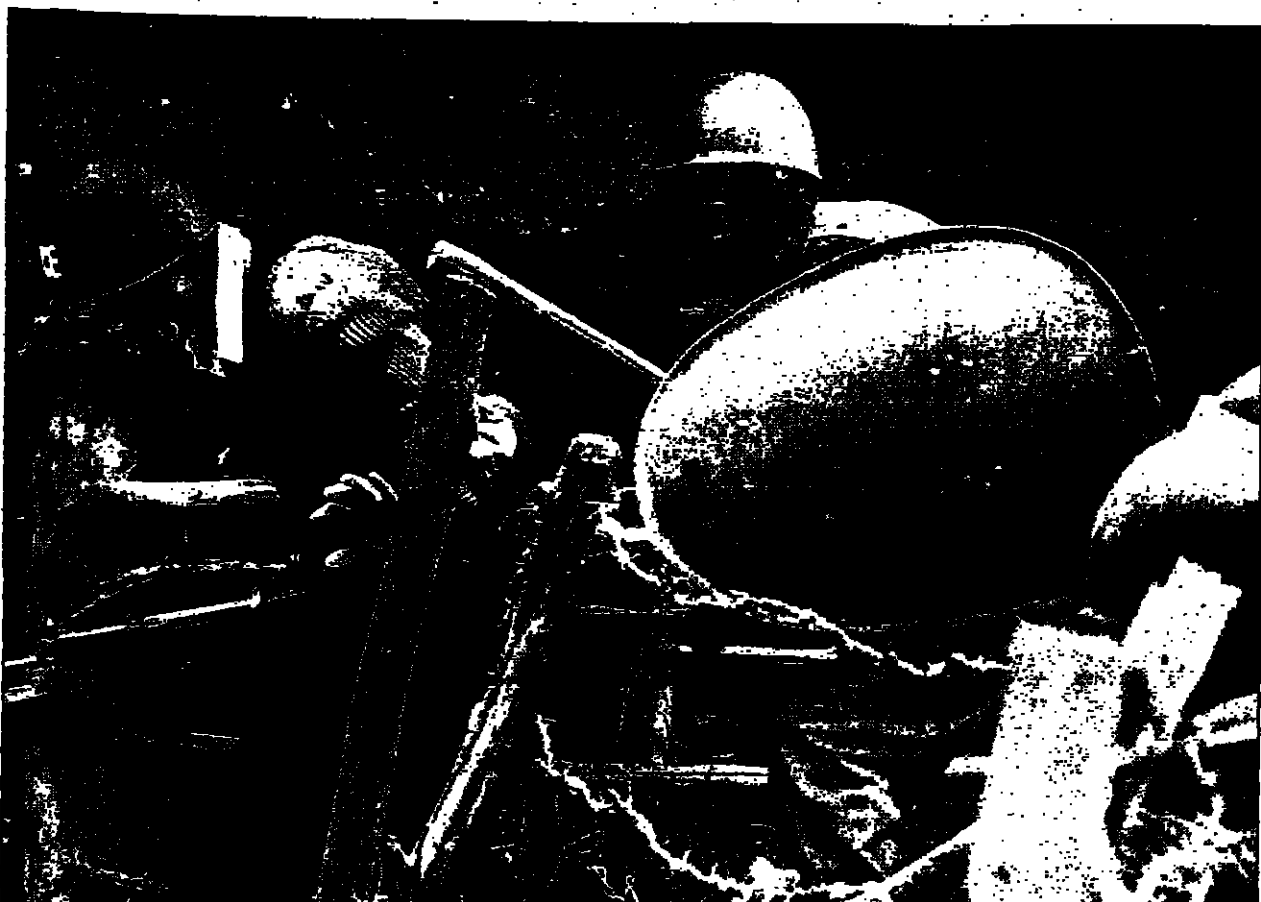
Sentenced to death by disease

Nairobi (Reuters) — An average of three prisoners die each day in Kenya's congested prisons, the Home Affairs Minister, Francis Lotodo, has told parliament. The main causes of death were AIDS-related ailments, malaria, meningitis and diarrhoeal diseases.

From January to the end of September, said Mr Lotodo, 819 inmates died. Of these, 291 were on remand. He added that lack of money meant his ministry could do nothing to improve prison conditions.

A High Court judge has said that "jailing anyone is like sending them to a death chamber", and the Attorney-General, Amos Wako, last week urged magistrates and judges not to send law-breakers to jail for petty offences. Last week President Daniel arap Moi set free 10,898 prisoners, mostly petty offenders, who had less than six months of their sentences left to serve.

Government figures show that in July, Kenya's 78 prisons, with a designed capacity of 21,000, held 37,066 inmates.



Watching brief: Soldiers and police patrol Nairobi's Kibera slums where two people have been shot and wounded in fierce ethnic fighting, sparked by the death of a Nubian man whose body was found on Sunday. Photograph: AP

Italy's fake invalids slow down the mail

In one village, 500 people out of 1,500 were registered disabled. **Andrew Gumbel** reports on the 'invalidopi' scandal

Rome — We always knew the Italian postal system was awful, but now we know why. Thanks to the revelations of a Roman investigating magistrate, we learn that what ought to be a thriving modern communications industry is being run by an army of invalids.

Almost 17,000 invalids to be exact, all of them with medical certificates to prove how handicapped they are. No wonder nothing works properly. Far from raising against what is arguably the worst public service in Europe, our hearts ought to be filled with compassion.

That lithe young woman scowling at her newspaper instead of attending to the long line of customers in front of her may not look unwell, but she has in fact got Parkinson's disease. Don't be hard on the man who seductively orders you to pull all

the staples out of your padded envelope before he will accept it for posting; he has a painful curvature of the spine.

And go easy on the postmen who take a week to carry letters across town, or several months to send them out of the country. Many should be in wheelchairs, and they carry out their task only out of a strong sense of civic duty.

That's the official version of events. The investigating magistrate, Giorgio Castellucci, has his doubts, particularly since he discovered that one "handicapped" postal worker plays football on his afternoons off, that another has a second job as a gym teacher and that a third is an aspiring fashion model whose severe mobility problem disappears on the catwalk.

Welcome to *invalidopi*, the latest scandal to erupt in this scandal-prone country. It has never been a secret that fake invalidity certificates were a dime a dozen in Italy — about one in two is false — but never before has anything this systematic been uncovered.

According to Mr Castellucci, the post office scam costs the state billions of lire in fraudulent invalidity benefits, as well as doing a disservice to the genuinely disabled, who are being squeezed out of badly needed jobs.

He has indicted 90 people, including doctors, health officials and post office managers, as well as the fake invalids themselves. He expects the final number of people sent for trial to exceed 2,500.

The scam dates back to the late 1980s, when the Post and Telecommunications Ministry was in the hands of the small, now defunct, Social Democrat party. According to the prosecution, the then post office minister, Carlo Vizzini, and his friends, handed out jobs to the sons and daughters of influential associates like sandwiches at a party, using a quota on employment of the disabled as a way of sneaking them through the back door.

Normally, disabled people would be selected by public sector competition, but in much of the country, particularly the Rome area, Naples and Sicily, the fake invalids were hired directly.

In one Sicilian village, Militeo Rosmarino, where the Social Democrats were keen to gather votes, about 500 of the 1,500-strong population were at one point registered as disabled. Many were inscribed illegally on the local electoral roll — registered as living at the

then mayor's house — even though they lived and worked in post offices in other parts of Sicily.

Whole families lived off the salaries and pensions from the scam, and returned the favour by propping up the Social Democrats' small share of the Italian vote.

Militeo Rosmarino was cleaned up three years ago, following an investigation by the Catholic magazine *Famiglia Cristiana*, a publication memorably denounced as "pornographic" by the head of the local health authority, who is now in jail. The disabled population has since fallen to fewer than 20.

The rest of Italy is only now waking up to the scale of the scandal. Since Mr Castellucci launched his investigation a few weeks ago, one post office building in Rome which contains personnel records has mysteriously caught fire, while documents on disability registration at a major public health centre in the capital have vanished into thin air. The number of people turning up at public offices to claim disability benefit has suddenly dropped by several thousand.

The post office scandal gives and insight into what happens when an essential public service is used for years as a pork-barrel for nepotism. The results have been catastrophic. The post arrives hopelessly late or not at all. Service is surly and inefficient. Battered staffing levels have blown a huge hole in the already debt-ridden national finances.

The new mayor of Militeo Rosmarino, Nuccio Carrara, estimates that 55,000 of the post office's 200,000-odd salaried positions need to be cut. He believes the judiciary may have been deliberately tipped off about the invalidity scandal by post office managers, keen to axe jobs without offending the powerful public sector unions.

The most serious losers, whatever happens, will be the country's real disabled, who have always suffered in silence in a country which considers them a source of shame and mostly keeps them hidden behind closed doors.

About 10,000 are looking for work in Rome alone. Every six months, the state assigns 600 of them to subsidised private sector jobs, but 90 per cent are immediately rejected. In the last year, the state administration has taken on only 35 genuinely disabled people — compared with the thousands registered as handicapped who are in fact as fit as fiddles.

British meeting with Nigerians provokes anger

MICHAEL SHERIDAN
Diplomatic Editor

The British government is coming under pressure to take a tougher stand against the Nigerian military regime after a quiet and apparently cordial series of meetings between Nigerian emissaries and British officials this week.

Britain is trying to stave off demands for sanctions against Nigeria at next month's Commonwealth summit, fearing British commercial interests could be damaged. But other Commonwealth governments are likely to heed the advice of a recent fact-finding mission, which concluded that only sanctions could help to restore democracy in West Africa's largest country.

The mission recommended a study of a possible oil embargo and measures to freeze the personal bank accounts and assets of members of the regime. It warned that Nigeria could dissolve into civil strife if the army held on to power.

There has been fresh opposition criticism of British policy after visits to London by the Nigerian Finance Minister, Anthony Ani, and Chief Ernest Shonabara, a personal representative of the Nigerian military leader, General Sani Abacha. The two men, who were on their way home from talks in Washington with the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank on Nigeria's debt, spoke at meetings organised by the Nigerian-British Chamber of Commerce, intended to boost investment in the country.

A cocktail party organised by the Chamber of Commerce was held at the Foreign Office

on Tuesday, although a Foreign Office spokesman said only one junior official attended. The Foreign Office maintains it aims to persuade General Abacha to release political prisoners and restore democracy. "At the moment the idea is to put the maximum pressure on Abacha to accelerate the reform process," a British official said.

Labour's foreign affairs spokesman, Tony Lloyd, yesterday called on the Government to examine the feasibility of sanctions and criticised the conduct of quiet diplomacy towards the regime. In a Commons motion he said there should be a phased, effective approach to sanctions, linked to a timetable for a return to civilian rule. "The British government should lead the world and call for a comprehensive package of measures ... that will really hurt this brutal regime," he said.

General Abacha has reacted to criticism from abroad by announcing a three-year timetable for the restoration of civilian rule, and by exercising clemency towards 40 people accused of plotting a coup.



General Abacha: threat of Commonwealth sanctions

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obituaries / gazette

Dolly Collins

Composer, folksong arranger, gardener: Dolly Collins left behind her a host of friends, some of the finest arrangements of English folksong, a body of classical compositions, and a well-tended cottage garden.

Born in Hastings in 1933, she grew up in an artistic, socialist, working-class family. Her mother's brother Fred Ball was the author Robert Tresselt's biographer, while her uncles Robin and George were artists. Her grandfather, from whom she acquired her gardening skills, played the tin whistle, and her grandmother would entertain Dolly and her younger sister, Shirley, with folksongs such as "The Bonny Labouring Boy" and "The Bonny Cuckoo". At Christmas the family sang carols in church harmonies. These, along with Uncle Fred's collection of Jimmy Yanner Monteverdi and Thomas Tallis 78s, were Dolly's earliest musical influences. The girls also sang madrigals with their mother and occasionally performed at local left-wing political meetings.

Dolly Collins started playing the piano at school and eventually began composing her own tunes. A breakthrough came when she met the Marxist composer Alan Bush who, impressed with her work, took

her on as a pupil. Collins subsidised her musical studies, which involved weekly trips up to the Workers' Music Association in London, with a variety of odd jobs including joining her mother as a bus conductor. Collins said that everything she knew about composition and folksong arrangement she learnt from Alan Bush. Meanwhile, her sister Shirley had left Hastings for London to make a name for herself as a folksinger in the burgeoning folk clubs.

The idea for Shirley and Dolly to work together came from Shirley's husband, John Marshall, in the mid-Sixties, a time of innovation and experimentation in the folk world as elsewhere. He suggested that Dolly arrange some of Shirley's songs. The arrangements, written for and performed on a replica 17th-century lute organ, were a perfect foil for Shirley's breathy voice. The result was the seminal *Sweet Primroses* album. Others soon followed. Each arrangement was a masterpiece: jewels of English tunes displayed in delicate Baroque settings, mystical and magical, and wonderful to sing to. As Shirley said, "You could launch yourself off on a Dolly arrangement." They were arrangements which gave the lie

to Constant Lambert's remark, "Once played, the only thing to do with a folk tune is to play it again - louder."

Her most celebrated work at this time was the folk suite *Anthems in Eden* (1968) commissioned by Radio 1 and which she wrote for a six-piece early music consort. Musically directed by David Mourow, *Anthems in Eden* is considered by many to be the definitive example of folk-music arrangement. Dolly Collins, along with, perhaps, Vaughan Williams and George Butterworth, possessed an innate feeling and understanding for English folk music, a sensitivity sadly lacking in most other English arrangers.

Throughout the Sixties and Seventies the Collins sisters toured Europe to critical acclaim, acquiring continuing cult status among fans who eagerly grabbed the CD reissues that appeared over the last couple of years.

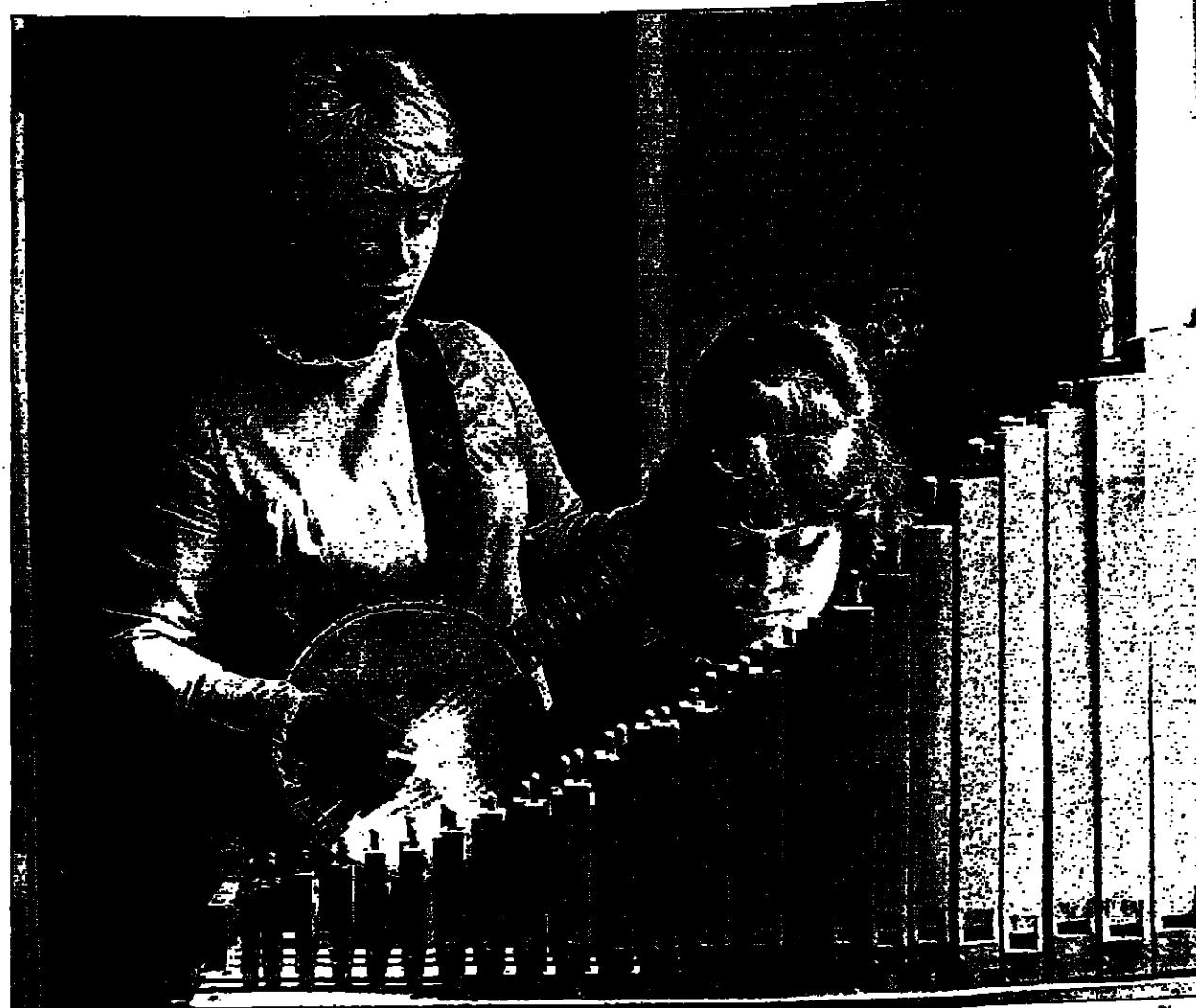
Dolly Collins was also in demand as an arranger by other singers and bands, notably by Peter Bellamy for his ballad opera *The Transports* (1977), for which she arranged and orchestrated the songs, and wrote the overture and bridge passages. A great success at the time, it continues to be performed.

Despite her love for the music, Dolly was a very private person and eventually found the pressures of touring and live concerts too much. She retreated from the public stage, to spend time with her son, Ben, and to earn her living from her other love, gardening. *For As Many as Will* (1978) was her last recording with Shirley and including, as it does, arrangements for the original lute organ, solo voice and piano, and early instruments, it is a fitting summation of Dolly Collins's folksong work.

She continued to compose, however, and just before her death she completed a cycle of First World War poems and a new mass written with the poet Maureen Duffy, and countless other classical compositions, so far unperformed, have been left to her son. Perhaps one day some enterprising conductor or radio producer will give them the airing they deserve and let the world hear the other side of this quintessential English composer.

David Arthur

Dorothy Ann (Dolly) Collins, composer, arranger and gardener, born Hastings 6 March 1933; twice married (one son); died Balmombe, West Sussex 22 September 1995.



An innate feeling for English folk music: Dolly (right) and Shirley Collins

Photograph: Collections / Brian Shuel

Air Chief Marshal Sir Harry Broadhurst

One of the great "fighting airmen" of the RAF and an outstanding exponent of the tactical use of air power, Harry Broadhurst was involved in operations from the beginning to the end of the Second World War.

He led the first Hurricane squadron (111 - "Trebble One") in the defence of the United Kingdom, 1939-40; commanded a fighter wing in the Battle of France and a night-fighter station (at Wittering, in Cambridgeshire) during the Battle of Britain; led a Spitfire Wing escorting bombers in the 1941-42 counter-offensive; took part in the 1942 Dieppe Raid operations; and by the time he was posted to the Desert Air Force in 1942 - first as Senior Air Staff Officer and then as Air Officer Commanding - was highly decorated.

From the time he joined the RAF in 1926, at the age of 19, "Broadhurst" had always wanted to be a fighter pilot, though he initially served on a bomber squadron (11), operations over the north-west frontier of India giving him a first experience of Army-RAF co-operation. His ambition was fulfilled when he served successfully with two fighter squadrons (41 and 19) and his flying skill was demonstrated

when he performed solo aerobatics at the 1932-33 Hendon Air Displays. He had an early taste of the Middle East when in 1936-37 he served as Chief Instructor at 4 Flying Training School, Abu Sueir, in Egypt.

During the Second World War Broadhurst made his mark as a fighter leader and tactical air commander, bringing his experience in France to his handling of squadrons in the Battle of Britain and in fighter command's counter-offensive. His appointment to the Desert Air Force was ideal - he brought with him an outstanding reputation and practical experience from the war's earlier air battles. Never was his flair for the handling of fighter bombers more clearly shown than when he brought them in at low level from the sea to break the Afrika Korps' defence of the Mareth Line in Tunisia and enabled the Eighth Army's advance to proceed.

Like other successful commanders in the Mediterranean theatre, Broadhurst was called back to Europe to become one of the leaders of Operation Overlord, in 1944 becoming Air Officer Commanding No 83 group, whose fighters and fighter-bombers supported the invading armies from Normandy to Berlin. In the awards



Broadhurst: buccannering

after the landings he was appointed CB and at the end of hostilities created KBE.

Peacetime gave Broadhurst less scope for the buccannering qualities which had made him an outstanding war leader. However, after appointments as Fighter Command in Britain and No 61 Group in Germany with the British Air Force of Occupation, then on the air staff and in Germany again as Commander-in-Chief Tactical Air Force, he was given a leading role to play.

This was in January 1956 as Air Officer Commanding-in-Chief Bomber Command, when it held responsibility for the British nuclear deterrent with its V-bombers and missiles. With

its Quick Reaction Alert responsibility, his task was to give his air crew a "fighter-type" mentality, and his wartime friendships with US Air Force generals helped the V-force's mutual standing with Strategic Air Command.

It was while he was with Bomber Command that Broadhurst was involved in a tragic accident to a Vulcan aircraft, in which he was flying as co-pilot, on its return from a triumphant visit to Australia and New Zealand. On its approach to Heathrow in poor visibility the aircraft struck the ground and was so damaged as to be uncontrollable. Broadhurst and the captain ejected successfully but the four other crew members, unable to bale out at such a low altitude, were killed.

Broadhurst had one more appointment before the end of his RAF service, as Commander Allied Air Forces Central Europe in 1959, facing the Warsaw Pact forces at the height of the Cold War. He held this post until his retirement in 1961, when he joined A.V. Roe, manufacturers of the Vulcan bomber. As deputy managing director of Hawker Siddeley Aviation and a director of the Hawker Siddeley Group, and as president of the Society of British Aerospace Companies, he saw at first

hand the effect on the aircraft industry of abrupt defence policy changes, with the cancellations of the P1154/STOL supersonic fighter and the HS681/STOL transport aircraft.

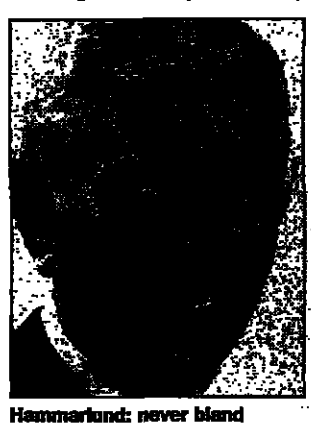
Broadhurst finally retired in 1976, his free-ranging spirit finding its outlet in sailing his seven-ton Bermuda cutter from Chichester Harbour.

Humphrey Wynn

Harry Broadhurst, air force officer, born Frintley, Surrey 28 October 1903; AFC 1937; DFC 1940, and Bar 1942; DSO and Bar 1941; CB 1944, KCB 1953, GCB 1960; KBE 1945; Commander-in-Chief, 2nd Tactical Air Force, Germany 1954-56; Air Officer Commanding-in-Chief, Bomber Command January 1956-May 1959; Commander Allied Air Forces, Central Europe 1959-61; managing director, A.V. Roe & Co Ltd 1961-66; director, Hawker Siddeley Aviation Ltd 1961-76; deputy managing director 1967-76; director, Hawker Siddeley Group Ltd 1968-76; vice-president, Society of British Aerospace Companies 1973-74, president, 1974-75, deputy president 1975-76; married 1929 Doris French (one daughter; marriage dissolved), 1946 Jean Towler (one daughter); died Birtwhar, West Sussex 29 August 1995.

Lollo Hammarlund died only five months after gaining the highest office - President of the International Table Tennis Federation - in the game he had distinguished since he was a boy.

The timing of his death helped highlight some of his greatest achievements in half a century serving one of the most popular sports in the world; he died only 10 months after the death of his predecessor, Ichiro Ogimura, one of the sport's legends. Nearly 40 years ago Hammarlund invited Ogimura from Japan to coach the Swedish national squad and to live in his home near Stockholm. They became friends for life and under Hammarlund's supervision Ogimura helped develop



Hammarlund: never bland

the first really great Swedish team of Schell Johansson, Christer Johansson, Hans Alster and Stellan Bengtsson, three of whom helped win the world team title in Sarajevo in 1973.

This established a famous tradition which has lasted until the modern era in which Jan-Ove Waldner, Jorgen Persson and Mikael Appelgren created one of the greatest teams of all time. They beat China in three successive world finals between 1989 and 1993 and tilted the balance of power away from Asia, where it had been sited for most of 20 years.

When Ogimura became president of the ITTF in 1987 Hammarlund became his deputy. The two of them were together in Seoul when, a year later, table tennis made a noisy Olympic debut before a packed crowd; the family of affiliated nations grew to more than 150, making it one of the biggest sports in the world. And they cooperated in the urgent and difficult legislation against toxic glue - used to stick rubbers to the blades of bats - which endangered the health of millions of youngsters until the federation took action.

Although Hammarlund was a good player, he never represented Sweden and it was as an organiser and administrator

that he found his *meier*. He started his own club near Stockholm at the age of only 18, became a board member of the Stockholm Association at 19, and was Swedish non-playing captain at 26, a role he held for nine years. Three years after that he joined the management committee of the European Table Tennis Union, of which he was later vice-president.

Hammarlund was never a bland official. He had a hot temper and could get angry. Occasionally people who did not know him thought he was rude, but in fact it was this same quality which enabled him to be so friendly with so many people.

This empathy was often allied to thoughtfulness, especially about players. Never was this better illustrated than after the brilliant men's singles final in the 1989 world championships when Waldner won 3-2 against Persson. The moment it was over hundreds of people gathered around Waldner to talk to touch and congratulate him. Only one went up and consoled the loser - Hammarlund.

James Leigh

Sven-Olof ("Lollo") Hammarlund, table tennis administrator, born Stockholm 19 February 1932; married (two daughters); died Stockholm 14 October 1995.

F. C. Badhwar

Fateh Chand Badhwar was the first chairman or head of independent India's Railway Board and responsible for laying the foundations of Indian Rail, one of the world's largest networks, covering over 1.08 million kilometres today.

He successfully supervised the merger between numerous privately owned rail lines across British India and those run by erstwhile princely states, consolidating them into one unit

shortly before independence in 1947.

Alongside, Badhwar used his engineering skills and background to design and modernise rolling stock and reduce the dependency on imports from Britain in the Fifties.

Badhwar believed the railways were the engine to help consolidate India's industrial revolution and he set about making this possible as railway board chairman in the mid-

Fifties. Unfortunately for some, his plans also led to the almost total replacement of the slow, uneconomical steam engines by efficient, but unromantic electric or diesel locomotives.

Badhwar was born in 1900 in Fatehpur in the northern state of Uttar Pradesh, the son of an Indian Civil Service (ICS) officer. He went to school at the prestigious Sherwood College, Nainital, in the north, before graduating in engineering from

Christ's College, Cambridge, in the early Twenties. On returning home in 1925 he became one of the first Indians to be recruited as a junior engineer into the privately owned East Indian Railway in Calcutta.

The railways were a fast-expanding sector as the British consolidated their hold over India and promotions for officers were swift. In 1947, the year of India's independence, Badhwar married Mary, a doctor.

After independence, Badhwar was one of the senior Indian railway officials; four years later he became head of the first Indian railway board. And, over the next four years, he set about modernising the rail system and, foreseeing a housing shortage, built exclusive colonies to house railway employees. The huge, upmarket Badhwar Park complex in the heart of Bombay, home to senior rail officials, is one such enclave.

After retirement, Badhwar was seconded, for a brief period, under the Commonwealth-sponsored Colombo Plan, to Ceylon (now Sri Lanka) to advise on ways to modernise the island's railways. Later, he joined the Calcutta-based Bird & Co, a leading private sector concern trading in coal and paper, as its director in New Delhi, till 1966.

A keen angler, birdwatcher and mountaineer, Badhwar was a self-effacing person who often eschewed the princely luxury of railway saloons whilst travelling around India.

Kuldip Singh

Fateh Chand Badhwar, railway executive, born Fatehpur (north India) 29 September 1900; joined East Indian Railways at Calcutta 1925; married; chairman, Indian Railway Board Chairman, 1951-54; died New Delhi 10 October 1995.

Bryan Johnson, actor, singer, died 18 October, aged 69. Made his name playing the Fool to Donald Wolf's King Lear. Appeared in the 1950s at the Old Vic in Chekhov, Ibsen and Rattigan, directed by Tyrone Guthrie. Turned to cabaret and represented Britain in the 1960 Eurovision Song Contest, finishing second with the song "Mr Looking High, High", which spent 11 weeks in the pop charts and reached No 20. Devised, with the playwright Patrick Galvin, a stage show about Oscar Wilde which he took to the West End in 1989.

Births, Marriages & Deaths

DEATHS

JACKSON: Christopher Ian, of Erdington, Birmingham, in St Mary's Hospice, on 17 October 1995, in his 38th year. Cremation and wake to be held 24 October 1995. Beloved son to Marion and Michael, brother Simon, Alan and Amanda. When the gods love dies young - Menander.

Announcements for Gazette BIRTHS, MARRIAGES & DEATHS should be sent in writing to the Gazette Editor, The Independent, 1 Canada Square, Canary Wharf, London E14 5DL, telephoned to 0171-293 2011 or faxed to 0171-293 2010, and are charged at £6.50 a line (VAT extra).

ROYAL ENGAGEMENTS

The Queen and The Duke of Edinburgh attend a Reception in Church House, London SW1, and attend a Thanksgiving Service at Westminster Abbey on 19 October 1995. The Duke of Edinburgh, Hereditary Life Member and Past President, Marylebone Cricket Club, opens the new indoor Cricket School, Lord's Ground, London NW5. The Prince of Wales, The Duke of York, The Duke of Gloucester, The Duke of Kent, The Duke of Cambridge, The Duke of Cornwall, The Duke of Devonshire, The Duke of Northumberland, The Duke of Norfolk, The Duke of Somerset, The Duke of Suffolk, The Duke of Westmeath, The Duke of Westminster, The Duke of York, The Duke of Gloucester, The Duke of Kent, The Duke of Cambridge, The Duke of Cornwall, The Duke of Devonshire, The Duke of Northumberland, The Duke of Norfolk, The Duke of Somerset, The Duke of Suffolk, The Duke of Westmeath, The Duke of Westminster, The Duke of York, The Duke of Gloucester, The Duke of Kent, The Duke of Cambridge, The Duke of Cornwall, The Duke of Devonshire, The Duke of Northumberland, The Duke of Norfolk, The Duke of Somerset, The Duke of Suffolk, The Duke of Westmeath, The Duke of Westminster, The Duke of York, The Duke of Gloucester, The Duke of Kent, The Duke of Cambridge, The Duke of Cornwall, The Duke of Devonshire, The Duke of Northumberland, The Duke of 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news analysis

Plenty of vroom as long as it's Green

The Motor Show must confound any environmentalist's hopes that the automobile is destined for extinction. Jonathan Glancey looks at our love affair with the car

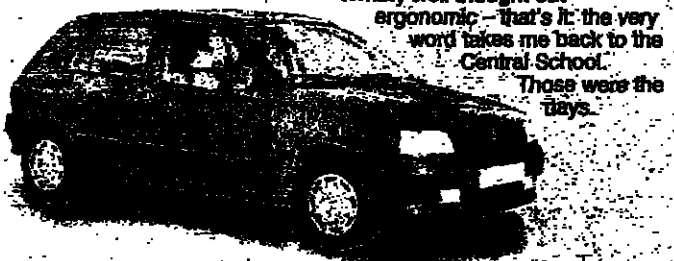
Executive, 45, Fulham

You've stepped up, groomed and polished, from a Renault Clio and you are on the way to the board room, garbed in regularly dry-cleaned Ammani. Mistress of the clipboard, flipchart, overhead projector and list of things-to-do, you aspire to efficiency, cleanliness and a Minimalist flat (even though daily life conspires against it). The car is a perfect statement about you (or so you would like to think): successful, aspirational, stylish.



Retired designer, 47, Worthing

Brian said I must be trying to regain my youth or else trying to get into PR at a late age when I traded in the Saab for the Clio. But it's a super little car and cuts quite a dash along the coast. It's terribly well thought out.



Teacher, 33, Bristol

You hang the jacket of your sharp Hugo Boss suit on the neat coat hook over the back seat. That way you keep fresh and cool for power meetings, ready to shoot sharp lines about bull parks, USPs and FMCs. You play squash, work out, stop at petrol stations for chewing gum, cappuccino and copies of FHM, Loaded and When Saturday Comes. You'd like to be Eric Cantona or Damon Hill.

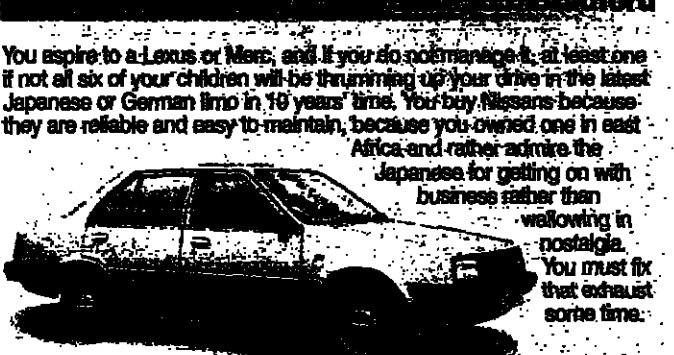


Nonchalant owner, 44, N2

You've picked up a few chicks in the Shogun and know all about what they call it, pancastritis? OK, so you've a few grey hairs (who hasn't?), but you still look cool in a Peter Stringfellow-kind-of way. The Shogun looks good parked outside the club. Never been off-road with it, although it gets a run to that new golf course near Epsom.



Aspiring to a Lexus or Merc, and if you do you'll manage it, at least one if not all six of your children will be thriving up your drive in the latest Japanese or German limo in 10 years' time. You buy a Mercedes because they are reliable and easy to maintain, because you owned one in east Africa and rather admire the Japanese for getting on with business rather than wallowing in nostalgia. You must fix that exhaust some time.



The car is going about its much-vaunted demise in a determinedly perverse way. We all know that we are meant to pay lip-service, at least, to the notion that if the car has a long-term future, it will be in the guise of a tiny, recyclable, solar-powered golf-trolley, banned from city centres, and restricted to a top speed of 50mph (sorry, 80km/h). We will use this ecologically friendly, souped-up Sinclair CS in a strictly rational manner (of course), and then only when there is no alternative form of transport in the guise of train, tram, bus, bicycle or roller-blade.

But who are "we"? It is a question worth asking, because at this year's Motor Show you will find more cars than ever before that can turn heads, attract traffic cops and are capable of blasting up to speeds of three-miles-a-minute and more. Macho muscle cars abound, from the AC Cobra to the Lamborghini Diablo, and that's only half-way through the A-Z of contemporary car makers.

There are several cars that are even capable of topping 200mph and one or two that will snap at the sicks of a Formula One racer. The McLaren F1 (a snip at £635,500) runs out of Bavarian-engineered puff at a little over 230mph. Handy, no doubt, for little Johnny's school run and those habitually late for work.

Of course these are exceptional cars designed for exceptionally well-off (or perverse) people and have little to do with the world of mass motoring. Even so, their proliferation is a notable phenomenon at a time when the car is said to be on its way out.

The truth is that the car is unlikely to be phased out from our lives as quickly as some environmentalists would like. Cars, and certainly cars powered by petrol or diesel engines, might well be banned from city centres in the not too distant future, and this makes certain sense as long as there is an investment in high-quality public transport.

But the problem of the car does not stop there. For, even if it is possible to devise cars that neither pollute nor encourage us to drive too fast, the problem of there being too many cars on our crowded roads beyond the city centre will still need to be solved. If everyone wants a car or has a right to one, where are they all going to go? Fume-free motorway jams might be better than smoky ones, but they would still be a mindless inefficiency.

Assuming that the car is here to stay in one form or another for the medium term, perhaps we can at least tame our urge to drive fast and fast. If the car is designed to be sexy and only fun if driven hell for leather, will we ever learn to slow down?

By making cars that look cuter and

more cuddly. This might sound silly, but it's a start and is exactly what manufacturers have been up to over the past few years in an effort to change the way we perceive the car or as a response to the way we are thinking about the car. So, the cuddly, bobby, top-like family saloon of the mid-Nineties is a world apart from the beffinned, chromed and gas-guzzling Yank Tank of the mid-Fifties.

Cruisin' and playing the radio with no particular place to go might have been a hip pastime in the first flush of the rock 'n' roll era, but it sounds reprehensible now, even if some of us (repentant, but still surviving) dinosaurs secretly enjoy the same petrol-headed pleasure celebrated so memorably in song by Chuck Berry in the Fifties.

At that time, the latest rolling sculpture from Motown (Detroit) was styled in the guise of jet fighters.

If the car is designed to be sexy and is only fun if driven hell for leather, how will we ever learn to slow down?

The best cars were the fastest away from the stop lights, driven by jocks who, like Top Gun test pilots from Fort Edwards (Chuck Yeager chief among them) had what Tom Wolfe called the Right Stuff.

This gung-ho, let it all hang out, machismo school of motoring (and car design) continued throughout the Sixties and into the Seventies. Fins may have given way to Coke-bottle curves and curves into angular lines and origami-like folds, but the notion that the car was still essentially about speed, sex and power was never undermined. Even the Mini, the tiniest four-seater city car yet devised, was best known in many circles for its startling starring role (along with Michael Caine and Noel Coward) in The Italian Job where its performance was anything but civil.

Today, car makers are falling over themselves to make the car appear cozy, safe and above all Green. Stripped of its "Nought to sixty in less than seven seconds" image, the archetypal '95 saloon has turned its back on Motown and all its petrol-headed ways. In fact, no manufacturer now advertises cars on sheer speed and acceleration. Instead, they struggle to find new and different ways of saying how their latest "people carrier" or city car is as safe and as friendly as a Labrador Retriever.

Many such messages ring hollow. Take the latest generation of four-wheel-drive "off-roader", cited as a friend of our delicate eco-system. Adverts for these latter-day jeeps from Kia, Subaru, Toyota, to name but several hundred horsepowers' worth, show them parked in sylvan settings, often with a couple of expensive mountain-bikes in tow. The conceit of the adverts is to suggest that these braggadocio cars are designed for a healthy open-air life.

In fact most spend much of their time being cruised up and down city streets by urban cowboys and cowgirls in pursuit of fashionable cafes and nightclubs much as the glitzy, beffinned and chromed American gas-guzzlers of the Fifties and Sixties they have replaced in the canon of motoring kitsch. And, if they do foray into the countryside, their fat tyres and prodigious four-wheel grip churn up rural byways and bucolic tracks (as, of course, do the mountain bikes they give piggy-back rides to).

Meanwhile, the corporate hack (cars that are part of today's "attractive remuneration packages"), despite claims to being sensitive to the environment, get wider, longer and faster with each speeding year. Nearly every one of the 52 currently listed versions of the Ford Mondeo has a top speed of 120mph or more and all can, and do (to judge by everyday tail-gate motorway driving) cruise at the ton. Maybe these cars are softer in shape and more fuel-efficient than their predecessors. But the Top Gun spirit has yet to fade away for good.

In fact, rather than becoming simpler and lighter, too many of the cars of the Nineties are too complex for their, and our, good. The industry might ponder to ecological concerns, yet it evidently feels that we want more and more gizmos, to the point where DIY car maintenance is no longer practical or even possible. We seem to need electric windows, electric seat adjusters and air-conditioning.

Contemporary saloons might bear little relation to the show-off, juke-box cars of the rock 'n' roll era, but we are, if anything, even more attached to them. They have become surprisingly comfortable second homes, escapes from office, from doing the washing up and from other people.

We are, it seems, glued firmly to the seats of our mobile fantasy worlds. The latest Fords might try to say "Goodbye Motown, hello the Centre for Alternative Technology" with their gloopy, piscine snouts and tiny, puckering mouths, but no amount of organic packaging will disguise either the ecology-baiting nature of the car nor our emotional and practical dependence on it.

Producer, 45, Putney

John the cameraman who you made your award-winning documentary last year introduced you to the Espace. It's great for taking the kids - Pippa, Tom and Jake - on holiday (north Norfolk, Pembroke, Cornwall) and back to school. Ginny uses it on the regular Sainsbury's run; amazing what you can get into it. Makes a really great office too. Pity Roly (the Labrador) was sick over the back seat.



Teacher, 33, Bristol

Swore by your old 2CV, but when it finally gave up the ghost after the Normandy trip, it was a new car or bust. The only one you could afford that had a bit of the 2CV magic was the Cinquecento. Stylish, classless, and agile - bit like you really. Great for the kids, too. How to have a new car and cope on £18,000 a year.



Master, 53, Berkshire

There's the dogs - Tiffin, Tommy Tucker, Mr Biff and Scrap - a bit of a squeeze, but they all pile in the Volvo for a drive out to the Downs for a Sunday walk. Some of the boys come too. The car smells a bit doggy, a bit tweedy too, or so matron said. Must be your old suit. Can't beat a good tweed suit. This one will see me to retirement, or so Susan, the wife, says. A bit like the Volvo really.



Student, 21, Chelsea

OK, so I got one of the first of the new Lotus. It's like a pre-degree prezzie from daddy. For a moment I thought I might have to lose 20 grand from the trust fund, but he coughed up, which was cool, you know? Jason says the Lotus is a bit like clothing. He's on to something. Shame about the dent. Bummer, eh?



Bob Chef, 19, Frome

When I said I'd driven into the bank, the lads at the Whipped Goose thought I meant Barclays - done a job, like - but, what I meant was that grass bank outside Yeovil. Well, that wrote off the Renault Robin; the Metro was £100. A bit of a smoker. Like my hot dogs. I want a Cosworth Sierra with big wings.



Diary

JOHN WALSH

A sensational rumour has been buzzing round the Frankfurt Book Fair. It concerns Robert Redford, the straw-haired heart-throb with the fondness for ecology and horses. A biography of the great man, written by one Michael Feeney-Callan, has been under way for some time (to be published here by Macmillan) but Redford has always refused to have anything to do with it. Then, a couple of months ago, he suddenly decided he liked the idea. He met the author, talked incessantly into Feeney-Callan's startled tape recorder, and the previously unauthorized biography became authorised.

But why did Redford change his mind? And is the book any good? Those of my acquaintance who've read extracts tell me, with emphasis and gesticulation, that it's the most folksy, unreluctant read they've come across in a long time. So why is Sonny Mehta, the boss of the trendy Knopfs house, starting the bidding for it at \$500,000?

The answer to all these queries, dear reader, is frighteningly simple. Robert Redford is about to stand for President of the US.

It's been a week of ageing American Artists' Anniversaries. Although Gore Vidal hit 70 on 3 October, his publisher, Tom Rosenthal, decided to throw a birthday party a fortnight later, to launch Vidal's autobiography, *Autobiography*. Iris Murdoch, Lady Antonia, Nigel Williams, Taki Theodoropoulos and unpeeped literary editors piled into the Carrick to hear the impossibly grand and senatorial Vidal deliver his sonorous bon mots. He greeted the news about Redford with equal enthusiasm ("Nobody'll vote for him. Paul Newman is a better actor and they wouldn't vote for him, either. And that stuff about the environment is the last thing the big corporations want to hear").

His off-the-cuff disparagements are wonderful. Referring to a Robert Redford born critic and Oxford don who was recently made in print about a friend of Vidal's, he said, "You can take Peter Conrad out of Tennessee (pause) but you cannot take the mania out of Peter Conrad." Someone

bold eagle of modern letters. Miller is looking uncommonly well for 80: he is courtly, ironic and willing to discuss anything, from the trauma of birthdays to the craven reluctance of Broadway theatres to mount new plays. But while escaping from the well-wishers anxious to shake Miller's hand, you turn a corner and come on the spectacle of Jane Austen's Elizabeth Bennett lighting a cig.

You pinch yourself. You must be in the grip of some hallucinogenic literary causerie. But no, it is Jennifer Ehle, who plays the strop-py-but-divine Lizzie in *Pride and Prejudice*, the BBC series that has brought the drinking classes of the nation home from the Crown & Greyhounds at 9pm sharp for the past four Sunday nights. So you say hello. You remark that you are a colossal fan of the programme. You note that Ms Ehle is even more gorgeous in the flesh than when she played Calypso in *The Caramelle Lawn*.

She has no time, however, for one's conversational salutes. Yes, she believes the programme is being quite well received. No, she would not like a drink, mineral water being her only liquid indulgence these days. No, she has not read the stuff in the *Mirror* about her affair with Colin Firth. Yes, she has read Ms Austen's other works, if only recently. Yes, she is enjoying playing Lady Anne in *Richard III* with the RSC at Stratford but is glad to own a car in which to escape. And so forth. As you blunder on, the truth gradually dawns that you are trying

desperately to be a character in the TV series. You are trying to be a nicer Mr Darcy, a less duplicitous Mr Wickham. But you realise you are sounding more and more like the oleaginous Mr Collins.

Ms Ehle realises it, too. As the conversational grilling subsides, she lifts her sparkling eyes and says, "You're not by any chance going to ask me to dance now, are you?"

Judge Stephen Tumim, the man who has done more for half-moon spectacles than anyone since Andrew Cruikshank in *Dr Finlay's Casebook*, was on jolly form in the Great Hall in Lincoln's Inn last night, where the Folio Society revived its distinguished tradition of debates. Tumim, the portly and beaming HM Inspector of Prisons for England and Wales, bravely advanced the motion that "The Freedom of Expression is Over-rated", a proposition stoutly defended by Jeremy Isaacs of the Royal Opera House.

I didn't spot any outbreaks of verbal abuse, but was intrigued by the presence of the writer Alec Hamilton in Hall Regency fig. He was, he said, impersonating Dr Thomas Bowdler, the Regency prude who went through the complete works of Shakespeare, taking out the bits deemed unsuitable for recital by the family hearth. And the original "Bowdleriser", Hamilton pointed out, spent the early 1800s, Tumim-like, as a "Commissioner to Inquire into the State of the Penitentiaries". Spooky or what?

An architect friend who hangs out in Soho rings me in terrific excitement. Mick Jagger has just bought five loft spaces in Wardour Street "and each one", confides my friend, "is three times the area of the top floor of my house. What is he planning?" It's perfectly obvious, surely - he is going to turn them into five retirement homes for himself and the Stones, so they can end their days in peaceful continuity, just one floor above the noise, the movie slats, the dodgy bars, the needle doorways, the broken dreams.... Or is he simply going in for property development?



And will Jennifer dance?

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The legacy of Fred West

It's not often that a civil servant makes someone's fortune. But author Geoffrey Wansell is probably going to become a very wealthy man, thanks to the efforts of the Official Solicitor, Peter Harris. Mr Harris has brokered the sale to publishers Hodder Headline of Frederick West's own jail autobiography and of 13 volumes of police transcripts of interviews with West, all for use in Mr Wansell's account of the West case. Whatever Mr Wansell's many talents, the presence of this material alone ensures that his book will be the clear leader in a packed post-trial field. He and his publishers must be feeling very pleased with themselves.

But should the rest of us share this warm glow? That certainly isn't our first reaction. In the middle of a trial that has been characterised by a constant flow of questions to witnesses about the sale of their stories to newspapers and others, this deal doesn't feel right. Did it have to happen now? And is it really the task of someone employed by the public to auction off stories with such remunerative blessings?

Mr Harris's office argues that he is just doing what the courts appointed him to do. As Official Solicitor, he represents (on our behalf) those who cannot represent themselves – particularly minors. The younger members of

the West family needed someone to act for them. In getting the best possible deal for their father's estate (which includes his papers and the transcripts), Mr Harris is fulfilling this "best friend" role.

Such explanations fail to reassure. In the first place the sale itself is suspect. We must not prejudice the outcome of the Rosemary West trial, but can we really countenance the possibility that the murder of several young women and girls should eventually benefit the estate of their killer, while the victims' families may be left with nothing? If criminals are not allowed to benefit from their crimes, then logically neither should their families.

If the legal answer to the above question is yes, the family must inherit, then there is something wrong with the law. At any event it was surely a mistake for the sale to be pushed through while the evidence is still being heard in court. Quite apart from the unseemliness of hawking the West transcripts before any culpability is determined – thus bracketing together the dispensation of justice and the sale of stories – there was no need to hold the auction now. If the timing was aimed at maximising the returns, then those involved should be ashamed of themselves.

A shameful lack of honour

Events over the past few days have provided powerful evidence that Michael Howard has indeed intervened regularly in the running of the prison service. Derek Lewis, during more than three years as Director-General of the Prison Service, was clearly fed up with such interference. That much is apparent from the writ against Mr Howard, which he issued yesterday. Mr Lewis portrays the Home Secretary breathing down his neck every day, obstructing staff appointments, interfering in industrial disputes with the prison officers' association, even pressuring him to suspend John Marriott, the former Governor of Parkhurst prison after three dangerous "lifers" escaped.

Mr Lewis is not the first person to think that he could do a better job if only a superior would cease pestering. His protestations are also self-serving. (Like Mr Howard, he tends to blame everyone but himself). And he may not be wholly reliable on the particulars. After all, he seems to have changed his story. In January, Mr Lewis told a Commons committee of MPs that Mr Howard had not intervened in the operational matters that led to Mr Marriott's removal.

Nevertheless, Mr Lewis's general case that his old boss is a busybody looks compelling. And who could blame Mr Howard for being so obsessive? He is the Home Secretary. We would be worried if he did not take a conscientious interest in those behind bars.

In normal circumstances, we would not expect Mr Howard to resign for being too involved in the running of Britain's prisons. Nor would we expect him to step down over the Parkhurst jail-break or the other high-profile escapes under his watch. They were serious: Sir John Latham's report on Monday described a prison system with security flaws that require urgent action, but it did not demand Mr Howard's head.

ANOTHER VIEW David Trimble

The trap in Sir Patrick's path

From the outset of the peace process, the Downing Street Declaration laid down that parties such as Sinn Féin had to establish a commitment to peaceful methods before talks. The Irish Prime Minister, Dick Spring, gave the reason in June when he said there was little point attempting to bring people into political dialogue if they could return to bombs and bullets if it doesn't work. Giving up bombs and bullets before talks sends a clear sign that Sinn Féin is turning its back on terrorism.

Unfortunately this requirement, which was originally agreed by the British and Irish governments and underwritten by the US government, is in danger of being eroded in two ways. The first is through the "twin-track" concept: that parallel to talks on decommissioning there should be a beginning to all-party talks on preliminary matters. The obvious danger here is that Sinn Féin will obstruct and slow down discussion in the first track while blurring the distinction between preliminary and substantive matters in the second track so as to pitch all parties into full talks while still possessing its guns and using them as a lever in the talks.

Sir Patrick Mayhew may have disclosed the second way the requirement to give up weapons may be in jeopardy at his press conference in Belfast on Tuesday. He said, "a commission might find some other means by which the necessary confidence can be generated". I suspect that elements in the Irish and US governments

are planning that an international commission (without the word disarmament or decommissioning in the title) will be set in progress, that it will conduct some investigations and come back and report that it is satisfied with Sinn Féin's commitment to peace, and urge the commencement of talks on that basis. And then the British government will be pressured into accepting such a report as a substitute for decommissioning. Sir Patrick's language may be walking him and us into the very trap that Dick Spring said a year ago would be intolerable.

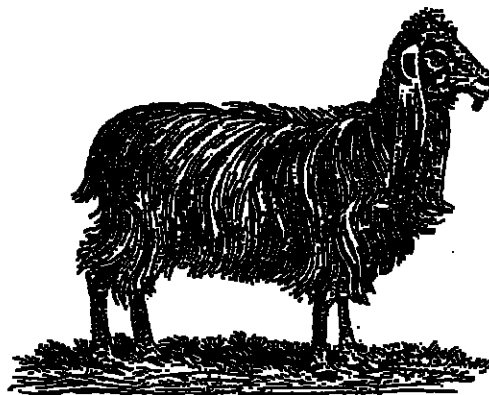
Instead of allowing himself to be moved by these elements within the Irish and US governments, Sir Patrick should insist that the Irish government sticks to the Downing Street Declaration. It should remind the White House that it gave Sinn Féin permission at Easter to raise money in the US in the expectation that Sinn Féin would deliver on arms. Rather than tamely accepting Sinn Féin's reneging on that understanding, the White House ought to be persuading it to accept realities.

Many years ago a Sinn Féin leader declared that the organisation would take power with an Armalite in one hand and a ballot paper in the other. What its members must accept is that no one will deal with them until they throw away the Armalite and trust exclusively to the ballot paper.

The writer is the leader of the Ulster Unionist Party.



① THE COMMON GOAT



③ THE SYRIAN GOAT



② THE CRAMBOIS GOAT



④ THE SCAPEGOAT

HEATH

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

The Million Man March: Farrakhan's words offer renewal

From Ms Linda Bellos

Sir: The Independent is to be congratulated for printing excerpts from Louis Farrakhan's speech (18 October) on Monday at the Million Man March. From my reading of what he said, there was no hint of race hatred or anti-Semitism.

I have heard Farrakhan's utterances in the past about the Jewish faith and the Jewish community in America, and they are unacceptable and offensive. It is also the case that he has distanced himself from these earlier views. He still has far to go to allay the legitimate anxieties of Jewish people, but at least he has offered to engage in dialogue.

What has been distressing about the coverage of the Nation of Islam is the way that both its leader and its message have been distorted. To assert that America is a racist society is not itself racist; it is instead a statement of fact – if, that is, one is black.

It took particular boldness to call for spiritual renewal and for a Million Man March. Is it such a bad thing that Farrakhan achieved this? Would it be preferable for the message of renewal to be delayed

until the messenger is acceptable to those who are not black?

I, for one, was particularly impressed by the non-sectarian call by Farrakhan for black men to join organisations, to register to vote, and to join religious groups, whether Christian, Jewish or Muslim. Far from separatist, this is about participating and, as such, it should be applauded or at least respected.

Yours sincerely,
LINDA BELLOS
London, N4
18 October

The writer is treasurer of the Africa Reparations Movement (UK).

From Mr Dick Baptiste
Sir: According to John Carlin and your leading article (16 October), the Million Man March that took place in Washington DC on Monday was a spectacle that would make Martin Luther King weep if he were alive today, and a "sideshow", compared to the merits of, say, a black president.

It's true that some of Louis Farrakhan's more extreme political views are thoroughly reactionary and deserving of criticism, but this does not take away the

reality of the worsening situation of the African-American community. Mr Carlin acknowledges the poverty and discrimination of the black community, but it seems that any action that does not involve the "integration" philosophy of Dr King can only be a hindrance to the emancipation of black American people.

Black nationalism is no answer to the institutionalised racism in America, but it is an attempt to invigorate black people with pride in themselves and, more importantly, it recognises the role played by central government in fostering and promoting racism.

With one exception, the Nation of Islam or an OJ Simpson trial, the problems of black America will not go away, neither will they bear any fruit in a future Powell administration.

Yours sincerely,
DICK BAPTISTE
Mitcham, Surrey
17 October

From Mr William Sceats
Sir: John Carlin states that "Thirty-two years on, segregation has gone, blacks occupy positions of office around the land; a black

man could be elected president of the United States next year." But as the OJ Simpson verdict demonstrates, Martin Luther King's hope for "judgement not by the colour of their skin but the content of their character" has proven an unrealistic dream for the majority of black America.

In March 1995, I happened upon a bar in Alabama that still bore the legend, "No coloureds". The occupants saw nothing wrong with such a sign and, when questioned, proceeded to air their views on racial issues.

Such racial hatred, as demonstrated by the example of Detective Mark Fuhrman, has made much of black America feel the need to voice its disgust. If the catalyst for such a display of solidarity has to be the anti-Semitic Farrakhan, then that is perhaps a fair price to pay to demonstrate how many American blacks feel that King's 1963 Civil Rights march on Washington has yet, away from the legislated confines of Capitol Hill, to fully permeate to American society as a whole.

Yours sincerely,
WILLIAM SCEATS
Edinburgh

Moved to tears by conference speech

From Mr John Jacobs

Sir: John Major's deeply personal and sincere account of how he knows all too well what it feels like when the money runs out on a Thursday moved me to tears, as did his promise that he would ensure that the Conservative Party always looked after the sick and vulnerable ("Major finds clear blue water", 14 October).

They were tears of rage that he could have the effrontery to say this in a year when he has presided over a government that, wisely and kindly:

1. has introduced the new Incapacity Benefit, the avowed aim of which is to cut benefits to the long-term sick and disabled;
2. is about to bring in the Jobseeker's Allowance, which will cut unemployment benefit from 12 months to six months and remove the benefit altogether from thousands of claimants; and
3. has abolished mortgage interest relief for the first nine months of unemployment or sickness for all new recipients of income support.

And that's just this year! No doubt all those driven deeper into poverty by these measures will take great comfort from the fact that their capital

gains and inheritances will not be taxed as much in future.

Yours sincerely,
JOHN JACOBS
Senior Lecturer in Social Policy
School of Cultural and Community Studies
University of Sussex
Falmer, Brighton
14 October

From Ms Laura Martin-Clark
Sir: John Major, on the basis of one speech to the party conference, becomes "authentic, honourable and decent" (leading article, 15 October)! What has happened to the government record of the past 16 years? Are we now to forget the broken promises, the sleaze, the vast increase in poverty, the lining of the pockets of Tory supporters, the sheer greed, the appeal to naked selfishness and the attacks on the poorest sections of our society?

Actions speak infinitely louder than words. The true Major came out when he promised to abolish capital gains tax, inheritance tax and to increase spending on assisted places.

Yours sincerely,
JOHN MALLEN
Dereham, Norfolk
15 October

Howard's end

From Mr John Morgan

Sir: Given that Michael Howard has been found guilty in the courts on at least two occasions, perhaps his idea of automatic life sentences for persistent offenders has its merits after all.

Yours faithfully,
JOHN MORGAN
London, SW18
17 October

Letters should be addressed to Letters to the Editor, and include a daytime telephone number. (Fax: 0171-293 2056; e-mail: letters@independent.co.uk) Letters may be edited for length and clarity. We regret that we are unable to acknowledge unpublished letters.

Money for houses

From Mr Andrew Smith

Sir: Chris Blackhurst's report concerning local authority capital receipts (16 October) intimates that the £6bn in frozen local authority capital receipts no longer exists and there is only £2bn available. However, the most recent Department of Environment statistics show £6.041bn held by local authorities in provision for credit liabilities set aside. In addition, there is £2bn of usable receipts that is available for spending now.

Labour's housing spokesman, Nick Raynsford MP, has spoken to a large number of local authorities this year on this matter, confirming that substantial capital receipts are available and that

many councils are eager to put them to good effect. These are the frozen capital receipts to which Labour's policy refers.

The present Government prohibits local authorities from spending this money on working capital projects. Labour has pledged that these funds would be released in a phased manner, enabling the construction of new social housing to proceed, tackling the acute housing crisis brought about by the Conservatives' policy failure.

Yours sincerely,
ANDREW SMITH
MP for Oxford East (Lab)
House of Commons
London, SW1
17 October
The writer is Shadow Chief Secretary to the Treasury.

Why Iraq must reject UN offer

From Ms E.A. Arbuthnot

Sir: Patrick Cockburn ("Saddam to show strength of his iron grip", 14 October) quotes a foreign diplomat as saying, regarding food shortages, that if the Iraqi regime "were really hard pressed they would have accepted the UN offer" of oil sales to meet food needs.

This much trailed red herring should be looked at in some detail:

1. Sales must be via Nato ally Turkey, requiring that oilfield facilities are extensively modernised at a cost of millions of dollars – to be taken out of the oil revenue to be released "for humanitarian purposes".
2. Turkey will receive "handling fees" for the distribution – also out of the revenue.
3. The UN will decide what food is needed and distribute it – a service that will also be paid for out of the revenues.
4. The UN Weapons Inspectorate – its flights, hotels, and satellite phone bills – are also to be recompensed out of the oil sales.
5. Reparation to Kuwait will be taken into account.

What is left will provide minimal aid and, arguably, will set a precedent: that it is all right for the UN to allow formerly largely developed, and now decimated, Iraq to scrape along at the bottom of the survival barrel.

Yesterday a friend, an American nurse who is an Arabic speaker and frequent streetwise visitor to Iraq, who has just returned, rang me:

"The terrible thing is that the hospitals are now near empty, everyone knows there is no medicine, sick children are simply loved – and die – at home."

This is the real face of the tragedy which is Iraq, an embargo in the name of democracy that, according to one UNICEF spokesman, is killing 9,000 children a month.

Yours faithfully,
FELICITY ARBUTHNOT
London, E9
15 October

Anglican employment

From The Rev Roger W. Reed

Sir: Strange and sad irony that you should offer a pulpit to the Rev Kit Chalcraft (Another View, 18 October) on the day that you publish the obituary of his illustrious predecessor at Hilborough.

My colleague seems as confused in his thinking as he is in his relationships. His position today owes nothing to a "two-tier" structure of appointments. Neither beneficed incumbents nor priests-in-charge do work for money, since we are neither employed nor paid, although in various ways we are privileged to be related to the secular system, for instance in the matter of national health insurance.

An Anglican minister receives a stipend, defined as an allowance to enable him to live neither in wealth nor poverty, in order that his life – not an eight-hour shift – may be devoted to ministry. He or she must take responsibility before God for what he chooses to do with the 24 hours that each day brings, subject to the commitment made at Ordination and at institution or licensing.

Kit Chalcraft complains of "a remote, centralised authority pontificating from afar" – forgetting that the priest is the local and personal representative and bearer of that authority for the pastoring and nurture of God's people. By his own action, Mr Chalcraft has rendered himself incapable of functioning as an Anglican priest in the vital matter of the sacrament of marriage. A beneficed appointment would not have protected him from his present position.

Yours faithfully,
ROGER REED
Priest-in-Charge
Blendworth and Chalton
with Idsworth
Horndean,
Hampshire
18 October

Wot an eye for English dialect

From Mr Dennis Freeborn

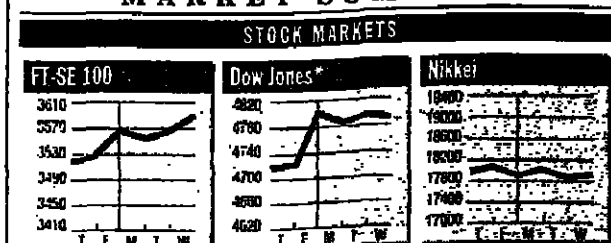
Sir: Meridel Holland's "should of" (Letters, 18 October) is a misspelling of "should've", the normal reduced spoken form of "should have" that everyone uses. "Should of" is the kind of written form called "eye-dialect" that novelists use to indicate a lower class character, like "wot" and "me mother" for "what" and "my mother". So it is inadmissible as evidence for a "new illiteracy".

Dr Holland's letter is patronising in its reference to "time-honoured and charming dialect usage". Non-standard dialect forms of English are neither more nor less "charming" than standard English. Objectively, they simply differ in their choice of a relatively small number of grammatical forms.

"Might've went" (Meridel Holland's second example) is dialectal. By what criterion is it to be judged a "creeping bane" rather than "charming", or even "crusade", like "who told thee it were one?" quoted in Ruth Clarke's letter (17 October)?

Yours faithfully,
DENNIS FREEBORN
York
18 October

MARKET SUMMARY



Index	Close	Day's change	Change (%)	12 Mth High	12 Mth Low	Yield (%)
FTSE 100	3583.0	+30.8	+0.9	3593.0	2943.4	4.0
FTSE 250	3941.3	+4.4	+0.1	3991.3	3300.9	3.5
FTSE 350	1785.3	+12.3	+0.7	1785.3	1477.0	3.8
FT Small Cap	1866.9	+3.4	+0.1	1993.1	1678.5	3.3
FT All-Share	1782.9	+11.5	+0.7	1787.5	1466.2	3.8
New York	4782.9	-13.0	-0.3	4801.8	3674.6	2.4
Tokyo	17896.0	-20.6	-0.1	19882.4	14485.4	0.8
Hong Kong	9973.7	-59.2	-0.6	10032.9	6967.9	3.2
Frankfurt	2194.8	-6.2	-0.3	2317.0	1911.0	2.0
Paris	1770.7	-6.1	-0.3	2017.3	1721.8	3.8
Milan	9398.0	+160.0	+1.7	10611.0	9238.0	2.1

*New Jones at 1500 hours. New Jones graph at 1500 hours

MAIN PRICE CHANGES

Index	Price (p)	Change (p)	% Change
Royal Ind Hldg	411.5	26.5	6.9
Smith (WH)	377	21	5.9
Britannic Asr	705	30	4.4
Northern Etc	852	36	4.4
Commercial Union	634	26	4.4

Index	Price (p)	Change (p)	% Change
Tratralgar House	21	2.5	10.6
Body Shop Int	135	6	4.5
London Mer Oil	54	2	3.8
Highland Dist	365	12	3.3
Howden Group	83.5	2.5	2.9

Index	Price (p)	Change (p)	% Change
Short Sterling	6.85	0.01	0.1
UK medium gilt	8.20	0.01	0.1
US long bond	7.20	0.01	0.1

Index	Price (p)	Change (p)	% Change
Money Market Rates	1 Month	1 Year	Medium Term
UK	6.66	6.88	8.14
US	5.75	5.78	5.95
Japan	0.25	0.50	2.85
Germany	4.06	4.06	6.54

Index	Price (p)	Change (p)	% Change
Bond Yields	1 Month	1 Year	Medium Term
UK	6.66	6.88	8.14
US	5.75	5.78	5.95
Japan	0.25	0.50	2.85
Germany	4.06	4.06	6.54

Index	Price (p)	Change (p)	% Change
Other Indicators	Yesterday	Day's chg	Year Ago
Oil Brent \$	16.08	-0.03	16.25
Gold \$	383.75	+0.25	385.50
Gold £	244.54	+0.02	241.12

Source: Datastream

IN BRIEF

Shares soar to new high

Shares soared to a new all-time closing high on the stock market yesterday, powered by better-than-expected economic data and a renewed frenzy of takeover speculation. The FT-SE 100 index ended 30.8 points up at a new closing peak of 3,593.0.

A huge fall in the US deficit in August boosted the dollar, but there was also good economic news from this side of the Atlantic. Dealers drew comfort from sluggish UK retail sales data and no sign of any acceleration in underlying earnings, which are deemed likely to give the Chancellor, Kenneth Clarke, more room to cut base rates in the forthcoming Budget. The feeling was reinforced after the Confederation of British Industry's director-general, Adair Turner, said that the next movement in UK rates should be downward.

Southgate to forgo CBI presidency

Sir Colin Southgate is giving up the chance to be president of the Confederation of British Industry next year because of pressure of work at his company. Thurn EMI, which is demerging next spring amid rumours that Rupert Murdoch is interested in buying the music business. Sir Colin Marshall, chairman of British Airways, is to replace Sir Colin as deputy president of the CBI, a job that automatically leads on to the presidency next May.

USAir back in the black

USAir confirmed yesterday that it had made a modest profit in the third quarter just as it is entering into negotiations with two competitors. United and American Airlines, on a possible buy-out. The carrier said it had earned \$43.1m (£27m), or 35 cents a share, in the quarter, compared with a loss of \$180.1m in the same period last year. It said it expected to stay in profit for the full year. The figures were its first quarterly profit in seven years. The results will be welcomed by British Airways, which has a 25 per cent stake in the carrier and has watched it suffer accumulating losses over the past three years.

Tring warns on profits

Tring International, the budget compact disc supplier, warned that its first-half profits would be materially below those in the same period last year. This was primarily due to continuing difficult trading conditions in the UK market. The company said profits would not be less than £1.4m and the interim dividend would be held at 1.42p. The shares fell 12p to 86p.

£4bn drug company merger

IVAX, the US group which claims to be the world's biggest generic drug company, and Hafslund of Norway are getting together in a \$6.5bn (£4bn) merger. The new entity, to be called IVAX Nycomed, will employ over 13,000 and have its headquarters in London, where it also hopes to have its primary stock market listing. Combined revenues would have been \$2.5bn in 1995.

Grid sell-off details tomorrow

Details of the £3bn demerger of the National Grid Company, owned mainly by the 12 regional electricity firms in England and Wales, are due to be announced tomorrow. The 12 have agreed to pay customers a £50 rebate following the flotation of the grid, which is expected to pay the companies a special dividend of £370m. Shares in the grid are likely to begin trading on 11 December.

Singapore fall-out: Fraud investigators respond swiftly to allegations of a high-level bank cover-up

Barings staff face fresh inquiry

STEPHEN VINES
Singapore
and JOHN EISENHAMMER
London

Singapore fraud investigators moved swiftly yesterday to interview James Bax and Simon Jones as part of a wide-ranging response into the collapse of Barings. Their action could involve criminal prosecution of local Barings executives and applications for extradition of some of the London staff. No charges have been laid against anyone but Nick Leeson, the trader accused of bringing down the bank.

The interviews came barely 24 hours after a damning 183-page report from the Singapore authorities which said there had been a deliberate cover-up by some Barings executives of an accounting warning sign which could have saved the bank. Mr Bax, the boss of Nick Leeson and Peter Norris, Barings' former chief executive, were also accused of lying to investigators.

Sources close to the investigation said yesterday that a farewell party planned for Mr Bax on Thursday was abruptly cancelled and that his weekend departure from Singapore was thrown into doubt.

Travel restrictions had been placed on both Mr Bax and on Mr Jones, chief operating officer for Barings South Asia, who are both still based in Singapore. Mr Bax was due to travel only after posting a \$11,360 bond.

Lawrence Ang, the director of the Commercial Affairs Department - responsible for fraud investigation - yesterday refused to name those who may face criminal proceedings. The department said its investigations had produced additional charges against Nick

Leeson, but these would not be added to the 11 on which he will stand trial in Singapore should his extradition from Germany be successful.

The existing charges fall into three categories of forgery, "certain price adjustments" and deceiving the Singapore International Monetary Exchange. These offences carry a maximum penalty of 14 years imprisonment. Asked whether the Singaporean authorities would accept an offer of co-operation from Mr Leeson, Mr Ang replied: "Yes, why not?" He was hesitant in saying whether such an offer had already been made but ultimately said that it had not.

Stephen Pollard, Mr Leeson's lawyer, said his client is likely to get a fairer trial in Singapore in the light of the new report. "The inspectors have focused on the extent to which the bank could not have collapsed without the acts and omissions of the London management. To that extent they must share the responsibility with Nick Leeson for the collapse of the bank."

Mr Ang would say nothing specific about his department's interest in Mr Norris - but he made clear that if people outside Singapore were responsible, there would be no hesitation in investigating them. "If offences were committed here, then it matters not where these people are. Obviously we can pursue [them] in accordance with extradition law."

Asked whether Mr Norris could be prosecuted if it were proved that he was involved in a conspiracy to conceal unlawful trading, as suggested by the inspectors, Mr Ang replied: "If it can be established that acts of conspiracy took place in Singapore, [the department] may be able to use that as a basis to launch investigations."



On the trail: Laurence Ang, head of Singapore's Commercial Affairs Department, announcing a new criminal investigation into the Barings collapse after a Finance Ministry report revealed new evidence. Photograph: Tan Ah Soon/AP

Peter Norris's lawyer in London said yesterday his client would fight any attempt to have him extradited to Singapore. "I imagine that... he would not be enthusiastic about returning voluntarily to face a court in Singapore," said Anthony Isaacs of Stephenson Harwood.

The Inspector's report suggests that Barings Futures (Singapore), the company at the

centre of the collapse, was trading unlawfully. If this were proved all the company's directors would be liable for criminal prosecution under the Singaporean Companies Act. Mr Norris, Mr Bax, Mr Jones and the Singaporean directors are therefore at risk. Nothing has been said so far about possible action against Singaporean nationals.

Mr Ang added that attempts to interview "seven to ten people" in the UK came to nothing because of the "virtually impossible" demands made by potential witnesses.

He said these were: that interviews had to be informal, that lawyers had to be present, that detailed questions had to be provided in advance, that questions could not go beyond

the scope of those notified, that any document referred to was to be supplied in advance, that the Commercial Affairs Department would not seek to summon or subpoena the witnesses and that the interviews were to be held under the privilege provisions of English law, in other words that their contents could not be used in any subsequent legal action.

Hongkong fear triggers plunge at Trafalgar

TOM STEVENSON
Deputy City Editor

Trafalgar House was locked in urgent negotiations with its advisers last night as its shares plunged to an all-time low.

Francis trading saw 70 million change hands, more than 10 times normal volume, as the market speculated that Hongkong Land, Trafalgar's largest shareholder, was poised to write off its £300m investment in the troubled engineering and construction conglomerate.

The company is expected to issue a statement today to reassure investors about its financial position and the support of Hongkong Land. It is understood that there will be a brief trading update although full details are not expected before the December announcement of full-year results for the year to September when extensive balance-sheet write-downs are anticipated.

The shares closed 2.5p lower at 21p last night, at which point they have lost three-quarters of their value this year. Some deals yesterday were struck as low as 18p as investors scrambled to get out.

The company's 6 per cent convertible preference shares also closed sharply lower, down 4.25p at 43p, at which point they notationally yield more than 17 per cent, indicating the market's scepticism that the coupon will ever be paid.

The ongoing crisis at the group, whose struggling subsidiaries include the Cunard

shipping line, has intensified in the past 10 days since the cash-raising disposal of the Ritz hotel to the secretive Barclay brothers was announced.

Although Trafalgar raised £75m from the sale, that is expected to only match the loss that the group will announce in December. Trading has remained poor across the range of Trafalgar's construction, engineering, housebuilding and cruise operations. Analysts said yesterday they had been frustrated in their attempts to speak to the company recently and remained in the dark about Trafalgar's financial strength.

PDFM, the fund manager, which is rumoured to have been a heavy buyer of the shares on the way down, refused to comment on its position last night. It is believed to have been involved in an agency cross of 28 million shares yesterday.

Hongkong Land's frustration in Trafalgar follows the injection since 1992 of more than £300m into the company. The stake was to have formed an insurance policy for Land's parent, Jardine Matheson, ahead of the Chinese takeover of Hong Kong in two years, but it has proved to be a disastrous investment.

Writing off the investment will cause a serious loss of face for the Kewick family that controls Jardine Matheson, and for Nigel Rich, the former Hongkong Land managing director, parachuted into Trafalgar in September 1994 to turn the company around.

Wells Fargo bids £6.4bn for rival

JOHN WILCOCK
Financial Correspondent

Wells Fargo, the American bank, has launched a hostile \$10.1bn (£6.4bn) bid for First Interstate Bancorp, a deal that would break previous US records and create the country's seventh-largest bank.

The announcement shocked Wall Street and adds to the merger mania already rampant in American retail banking, where size is seen as vital for survival.

Wells Fargo expects to make cost savings of \$700m a year by

closing down overlapping operations, echoing claims by Lloyd's Bank in Britain that it would save £350m a year from its own proposed merger with TSB. First Interstate has given the bid a cool response.

American banks are facing intense competition not only from banks at home and abroad but also from industrial giants such as General Motors and AT&T, which have huge credit card businesses, and from brokerage houses that offer bank-like cheque and other services.

First Interstate and Wells Fargo had been talking about a

merger, but Wells' lucrative offer puts pressure on the Los Angeles-based First Interstate to succumb, in a move described by analysts as "a bear hug".

San Francisco-based Wells Fargo, the nation's 17th-largest bank, has proposed to exchange five-eighths of a share for each share of First Interstate, representing a price of \$133.50 a share, 26 per cent higher than First Interstate's closing share price on Tuesday.

The combined bank would have \$107bn in assets and nearly 2,000 offices, before branch closures.

News of the hostile bid sent US bank shares soaring. First Interstate's shares shot up 28.8 per cent to \$136.50 yesterday afternoon on the New York Stock Exchange. Wells' shares jumped 5.7 per cent to \$225.75.

"The economic benefit of the proposed merger is significant for shareholders of both companies," said Paul Hazen, chairman and chief executive of Wells.

William Siart, chairman of First Interstate, said: "I am deeply disappointed that Wells Fargo would take this uninvited action."

US sales slump hits Body Shop profits

NIGEL COPE

The problems at Body Shop, the toiletries group, deepened yesterday when the company announced a 26 per cent decline in profits caused by continuing problems at the group's American operations.

The US division slumped into a £2.4m loss in the six months to August compared with a £1.5m last time. The company blamed higher operating overheads together with a poor performance in the stores the company operates itself, rather than those it franchises out.

Body Shop plans to spend \$2m on an advertising campaign in the US in an attempt to raise consumer awareness of the brand, which is under pressure from rival chains. The campaign will focus on New York, Washington, Chicago and Los Angeles, and will not go national unless it produces an improved performance in the stores. "The

US is a difficult market and it is necessary to raise the profile of the Body Shop name," the company said.

The US has proved a hard slog but it is now the company's largest market with 262 stores. It opened a further 27 in the last six months with a further 13 openings planned by the end of the year. US sales were 16 per cent higher at £44m but like-for-like sales fell 8 per cent. The company said that the rate of sales decline had fallen to 2 per cent since the end of August.

Group profits fell 26 per cent to £12.4m on sales up 15 per cent at £238m. Full-year profits are not expected to exceed last year's £33.5m and some analysts believe it will struggle to meet this target. The UK stores are doing little better with profits down £1.4m to £2.9m due to higher costs. However, like-for-like sales improved 2 per cent. The shares fell 6p to 135p.

Comment, Page 23

Windows drives US export surge

DIANE COYLE
Economics Correspondent

The first week's shipments of Microsoft's Windows 95 software helped to take US exports to a record in August. The dollar jumped against the mark and yen in reaction to figures showing that the trade deficit fell unexpectedly to its lowest since last December.

Higher exports of advanced technology goods, including software and computers, aircraft and cars took the shortfall on trade in goods and services down to \$8.8bn, a stunning \$2.4bn drop from the previous month's record deficit. Total exports reached their highest level ever, at \$65.74bn.

The pleasant surprise sent the dollar from below ¥100 to ¥101 and from DM1.41 to nearly DM1.43, although it later retreated slightly.

Economists cautioned that it would be unwise to read too much into one month's figures. Most expect the gap to have widened again in September. Nevertheless, there is general agreement that the trend is favourable, with US exporters reaping the benefits of a weak dollar earlier this year.

"We are finally starting to see some trend improvement in the deficit," said Josh Feiman, an economist at Bankers Trust in New York. "These figures provided the first palpable evidence of it."

Lewis Alexander, chief economist at the Commerce Department, said: "There is every reason to be optimistic."

However, some economists sounded a note of caution about the improvement. Chris Iggo, an economist at Chase Manhattan bank, said: "The deficit is at a much higher level than last year. It is going to be a long time before we see a substantial reduction."

The most dramatic rise in exports in August was a \$1.1bn jump in shipments of advanced technology goods. Exports of cars and car parts were up \$850m, while civilian aircraft exports recovered by \$318m from an unusually low level in July. The politically sensitive bi-

lateral trade deficit with Japan shrank for the fifth month in a row, to \$5.12bn, thanks to higher US exports of computers and lower imports of Japanese cars. America's shortfall in trade with Mexico fell to \$1.1bn, the lowest since the country's financial crisis broke out in January. The improvement in the US trade position would have become apparent earlier if it had not been disguised by the dive in exports to Mexico after the crisis.

However, the biggest improvement came in trade with Western Europe. The US deficit fell from an unusually high \$3.1bn in July to \$769m in August.

Shock to system, page 26

CHRONOMAT

At a time when instruments covering up with Mach 2 flight data, continued improvements to the mechanical chronograph simply underscore that there's more to time than technology. A movement's intricate beauty or a hand-polished case's lustrous gleam do put technological progress in a broader perspective. Like the Chronomat, the world's first but surely not last sophisticated timepiece, Chronomat draws time and space ever closer with aesthetic excellence as well as outstanding technical performance.

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INSTRUMENTS FOR PROFESSIONALS



"Those who claim the creation of a flexible labour market is capable of producing sustained low-inflationary growth have yet to prove their case"

Echoes of 1987 appear in the labour market

After the shock of the rise in retail price inflation to 3.9 per cent last week, the latest sales figures were eagerly awaited for evidence of how consumers might be responding to the attempt by retailers to rebuild margins. Fierce competition in the high street has been a key reason why intense cost pressures in manufacturing have not translated into a big hike in retail price inflation.

On the face of it, flat retail sales in September - representing the first annual fall since 1992 - are as clear a response from consumers as the Treasury, for one, might have hoped. You can push prices up, but don't expect us to buy, seems to be the message from consumers. Well, maybe. With both the inflation and sales figures clearly affected by a long, hot summer, it would be premature to conclude that consumers will necessarily have the last word in this tug of war with retailers. For that, we really will need to see more evidence.

In the longer term, the inflationary outlook hinges on the behaviour of the labour market. If there was general surprise in the City at the weakness of retail sales, there was just as much astonishment at the apparent buoyancy of the labour market. The decline in claimant unemployment, which was petering out in the first half of the year, appears to have resumed.

The unemployment count may be somewhat flattered by the effects of the academic year, as new graduates take up jobs or return to higher education. On the other

hand, the new rules associated with the switch to incapacity benefit are estimated to be leading to a modest increase in claimant unemployment. The clearest evidence that the labour market is more active than had been thought came from the Labour Force Survey, which showed the biggest increase in a three month period in employment since it started to recover in 1993.

So far, however, renewed buoyancy in the labour market is not leading to a pick-up in underlying earnings. These grew by 3.25 per cent in August, the same as in July and down on June. Provided this remains the case, we can relax about the prospects for inflation.

This is a big provision. Goldman Sachs has warned that on a wide range of measures - such as the ratio of vacancies to short-term unemployment - the labour market is showing characteristics last seen in early 1987. This was just before wage inflation began to pick up in earnest. Headline inflation may fall next month because of the cut in mortgage rates, but those who claim the creation of a flexible labour market is capable of producing sustained low inflationary growth have yet to prove their case.

Another teaser on competition policy

The Department of Trade and Industry is teasing us again over competition policy, and very irritating it is after all the Gov-

ernment's broken promises on reform over the last six years. Jonathan Evans, the Corporate Affairs Minister, has written to Richard Caborn, chairman of the Commons trade and industry committee, suggesting an important change in the way competition is policed. The DTI, he says, is drawing up proposals to make the Office of Fair Trading behave more like a single competition authority which both investigates problems and implements the remedies.

The role of the Monopolies and Mergers Commission would then be to give an independent judgement where cases are contested. According to Mr Evans, "this may require some rebalancing of the roles of the OFT and MMC, giving the latter a primarily adjudicating role." This is a significant shift, at a time when the Government is fighting off suggestions from Mr Caborn's committee, from Labour and from Sir Bryan Carsberg, the former director general of the OFT, that there should be a single competition authority.

Mr Evans opposes any radical reform like that. But his letter gives a lot of ground to critics of the present system. The more important issue, however, is whether the competition authorities - whatever form they take - should be given more power to act directly against abuses. In the UK, the emphasis is on lengthy investigation followed eventually by action, usually in the form of a ban against repeat offences. The prohibition system common on the Continent tends to ban anti-competitive practices first and

then argue about them in court afterwards.

There is a consensus that more prohibition is needed in the UK, a consensus which Mr Evans seems to go along with at least to some extent. It is when it comes to the detail, that the practice seems to fall short of the rhetoric. Mr Evans does indeed envisage an OFT with strengthened powers of investigation, the ability to demand undertakings from companies as an alternative to MMC investigations, and powers to make interim relief orders banning undesirable activities. But other important changes to strengthen the OFT, which the Government, the Opposition and Sir Bryan all agree are desirable, have been promised by DTI ministers in announcements in 1989 and 1993 and there is still no sign of them appearing in a Queen's Speech. Mr Evans may well believe what he says about strengthening the OFT, but does his boss, Ian Lang?

Testing times ahead for Body Shop

Has The Body Shop passed its sell-by date. As the collapse in half-year profits and steadily declining share price would indicate, or is this just a temporary aberration? In time-honoured fashion, Gordon Roddick, chairman, describes what is plainly proving a difficult year as one of "consolidation". That is usually code for worse to come. For the time being, however, Mr Roddick continues to in-

sist there will be little overall change in profits for the year. With like-for-like sales more or less static, losses in the US mounting, and costs spiralling, it is hard to see how this can be the case, but who knows, he could be right.

The big question, however, is not so much where short-term profits are heading as whether Body Shop's retail concept - revolutionary enough in its time - has outgrown its shelf life. Body Shop clearly believes not, for it is continuing to expand at breakneck speed. Some 90 new stores were opened in the half-year, taking the total to 1,300 worldwide. For the time being the expansion has stopped generating profits growth, but it is only a matter of time before that picks up again too, Body Shop insists. We'll see.

The test will be at Christmas. This all-important trading season is not going to be an easy one for Body Shop. Its green credentials have been challenged, and, however unfairly, some of the mud has inevitably stuck. Meanwhile, other more traditional retailers of toiletry and skin-care products have made great strides in introducing their own environment- and animal-friendly lines. Body Shop no longer has the free ride it once did.

As a small niche player on the high street and in the shopping malls, there was always going to be a good place for Body Shop. More questionable is whether the company's limited product range and brand name can sustain the international retail organisation that Body Shop aspires to be.

Former high-street salesman reaps handsome reward for his one-man furniture venture

Kirkham to raise £60m in share sale

TOM STEVENSON
Deputy City Editor

Graham Kirkham, the son of a Yorkshire miner who left school at 16 with no O levels, is to raise £60m by selling one-third of his 52 per cent stake in DFS Furniture, the three-piece suite retailer he founded 26 years ago.

Mr Kirkham said the share sale came in response to repeated phone calls from institutions anxious to buy shares in what is a very tight market. Ever jokey and amiable, he admitted, that his motives were not completely altruistic - he wouldn't be sorry to accept the money.

The proceeds of the share sale will bolster the £130m he took away from DFS's 1993 flotation, when he sold 48 per cent of the family-owned business. Even after the disposal, Mr Kirkham will retain a stake of about 35 per cent in the furniture retailer, worth more than £100m at yesterday's closing price of 345p.

News of the share sale accompanied strong full-year profit figures for the 12 months to July and a special 10p dividend to shareholders to reduce the company's fast growing cash pile. Pre-tax profits jumped 23

per cent to £26.23m despite flagging consumer demand and a moribund housing market, normally a prerequisite for growing sales of household goods.

Even before the special payout, the underlying dividend growth was a healthy 15 per cent from 7.2p a share to 8.3p.

A keen collector, Mr Kirkham agreed the art market would welcome his decision to release another slice of his considerable wealth. He remains resolutely unimpressed by money, keeping a substantial art and antiques collection in a beautiful Georgian mansion, Cantley Hall, where he occasionally entertains, but chooses to live in an unassuming four-bedroom modern house a few miles away.

Mr Kirkham remained tight-lipped about his plans for the £60m, but he dismissed suggestions that he would dilute his interest in DFS by sinking the money into yachts or football clubs - "DFS is not a job, it's a way of life" - and laughed off suggestions that he would repeat a recent multi-million pound loan to the Tory party.

After a year during which the company paused for breath,



Sitting on a fortune: Graham Kirkham, who is to raise £60m by selling one-third of his stake in the cash-rich furniture group he launched in 1969 Photograph: Michael Steele

opening just one new outlet at the end of the financial period, DFS also announced an ambitious expansion programme and a move out of its Midlands and Northern heartland into southern England.

Six new openings are planned both this year and next and a target of 100 shops compares with 32 now. Despite the growth

plans analysts believed more special dividends were likely in future years as the company continued to throw off more cash than it could spend opening new shops.

Mr Kirkham's proposed share sale is the latest reward for the former salesman at Hardys, a high-street furniture chain that became part of Harris

Queensway. Impatient with working for someone else, he struck out in 1969 and set up DFS. The model of vertical integration, DFS made its own furniture upstairs, bringing it down to the showroom. Mr Kirkham was delivery man, salesman and accountant; he even cut the material.

Investment column, page 24

Kevin tells of father's share price 'vanity'

JOHN WILLCOCK
Financial Correspondent

Robert Maxwell regarded the share price of his business empire as a measure of his personal popularity. "Part of his vanity", and ploughed millions of pounds into supporting the price, his youngest son Kevin said yesterday.

The late tycoon came to believe that the share price of Maxwell Communication Corporation (MCC) was being driven down in 1991 by a bear raid, an organised group of speculators.

On his third day of giving evidence, Kevin Maxwell told the court his view of the "seeds and origins" of the collapse of the Maxwell business empire in 1991.

Questioned by his counsel Alan Jones QC, Kevin said that his father spent millions during 1991 trying to support the MCC share price, but failed for two reasons: the London Stock Exchange was lenient in making the speculators pay for the stock; and the investment bank Goldman Sachs was in effect selling its own MCC stock, held as collateral for Maxwell loans.

Asked about his father's attitude to MCC's share price, Kevin said: "There is no question that the share price of his publicly quoted companies was a matter of pride... a part of his vanity... if the share price was rising he felt better."

"He felt the share price reflected in part public esteem for his business. So it was the first thing he looked for in the morning and the last thing at night. It was a personal fixation."

To counteract this he consulted with his main adviser, Goldman Sachs' Eric Sheinberg, to buy MCC shares through off-shore entities. But the price did not improve much.

The Maxwell Trial



Day 80

Kevin said he had seen statements made to the Serious Fraud Office by Mr Sheinberg and told the court that the prosecution "haven't called Eric Sheinberg and they should".

Earlier Kevin had described to the court his father's interest in Israel, which he said had not really started until the late 1980s, although his father had always been interested in and supported the state of Israel.

Robert Maxwell's interest in Israel "was stimulated by what can be described as a return to his roots". His son said he had survived the Holocaust but most of his family, who were Jewish, had perished.

Kevin said he had grown up not realising his father had any relatives but extensive research by his mother had uncovered some 200 relatives in different parts of the world.

Robert Maxwell had financed the massive airlift of Jewish children from Chernobyl after the 1986 nuclear disaster and assisted with their resettlement in Israel.

His substantial investments in the Israeli companies Scitex and Teva were seen in Israel as showing confidence in the country at a time when Israel was seen as risky.

Kevin, his brother Ian and the former Maxwell adviser Larry Trachtenberg deny conspiracy to defraud the pension funds by misusing £22m worth of shares in Teva as security for a loan in a bid to prop up the crumbling Maxwell empire in the days following its founder's death.

Kevin alone denies a similar charge of conspiring with his late father to misuse £100m of Scitex shares to pay private Maxwell company debts. In both cases the prosecution claims the shares were not theirs to use but belonged to the pension fund.

Kevin has told the court that he believed what his father had told him - that the shares had been transferred from the pension fund to the Robert Maxwell Group - and that he acted legally.

Kevin told the jury that, with the benefit of reflection, the death of his father and the loss of his famed negotiating skills was decisive. He admitted: "I did not have his stature, his reputation. I did not have 40 years of business experience when facing the NatWest and the group's other bankers."

Questioned by his counsel about the origins of the group's failure and the degree of responsibility he felt, Kevin replied: "I feel that I share a significant responsibility for the collapse of the business."

He went on to list causes, including disastrous losses of over £300m in share values in the 1987 world stock market crash. The trial continues today.

Unemployment falls but recovery evades the high street

PAUL WALLACE
Economics Editor

September shows year's biggest jobless fall, while retail sales slip to lower level than a year ago

Unemployment fell in September by more than in any month this year, but there was no sign of recovery in the high street, with retail sales now lower than they were a year ago.

The decline of 27,000 in the claimant total was much larger than the markets had expected. Spread across all regions, the fall in unemployment brought the jobless count down to 2,265,000.

The marked trend since the start of the year of progressively smaller monthly declines in unemployment now appears to be reversing itself. According to the

Central Statistical Office, the trend monthly decline in unemployment is currently running at between 10,000 and 15,000.

However, flat retail sales in September also came as a surprise to the markets, which had been expecting a rise of more than half a per cent on August. This in turn meant retail sales were half a per cent down on their level in September 1994, the first time they have fallen at an annual rate since 1992.

Supermarkets, which pushed up prices aggressively last

month, saw a decline in sales of 1.3 per cent compared with August. However, textiles, clothing and footwear stores, which also increased prices, saw a rise in sales of 1.6 per cent.

The effects of a hot summer make it difficult to work out what the implications of the figures are for retail price inflation. "The real test will come in October and November," said Ian Shepherdson, economist at HSBC Markets, "as retailers and consumers play out their familiar cat-and-mouse game."

"Something has to give," said

Geoffrey Dicks, UK economist at NatWest Markets. With underlying earnings still rising at only 3.25 per cent in August, consumers were feeling the pinch. Now that retailers were more determined to pass on higher costs, the effect was being felt in declining sales.

Underlying earnings remained particularly modest in the services sector where the rate of increase remains at 2.5 per cent. This was despite further indications that the labour market was more buoyant than had been thought. Vacancies at

Jobcentres - which account for about a third of all vacancies in the economy - rose in September by 10,000 to 193,000, their highest level for more than five years. Another positive reading of the labour market came from the quarterly Labour Force Survey (LFS), which is based on a sample of 60,000 households.

This showed that unemployment, measured according to international conventions, fell by 18,000 in the summer (June to August) compared with the spring (March to May). In the spring it had risen

by 28,000. According to the LFS, employment rose by 107,000 during the summer, with most of the new jobs going to women who rejoined the workforce. This was the biggest increase in employment since it began to rise again in mid-1993.

However, three-quarters of the new jobs recorded by the LFS in the summer were part-time. This is much higher than the overall pattern since employment started to rise in the recovery. Part-time jobs account for just under half the to-

tal increase in employment since spring 1993.

"The most likely explanation of the drop in unemployment" said Geoffrey Dicks, UK economist at NatWest Markets, "is that jobs are being created in the services sector where the low rate of wage increase is pricing people into jobs."

Manufacturing employment fell in the second quarter by 4,000. Further pressure on jobs in the sector may come from the fact that unit labour costs rose by 3.6 per cent in the three months ending August. Productivity rose by only 1 per cent, its lowest since June 1991.

Comment, above

Claimant unemployment



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business

THE INVESTMENT COLUMN

Edited by TOM STEVENSON

DFS maintains unbroken record with £26m profit

One of the biggest problems of DFS Furniture is finding anyone who has not fallen under the spell of Graham Kirkham, its charming chairman. If, like him, you have taken £180m out of your company in two years and still hold a stake worth more than £100m you can probably afford to be extremely nice, but his attention to putting people at their ease is crucial to the success of the company. In a commodity business like selling three-piece suites, making the customer feel king is a crucial differentiation.

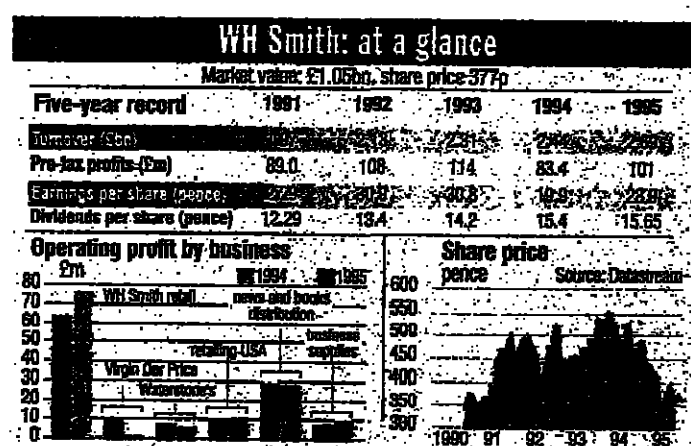
The success of DFS's approach was confirmed yesterday when the company announced its 26th successive year of growth, increased its full year payout by 15 per cent and rewarded shareholders with a special dividend worth 10p a share. Pre-tax profits jumped 23 per cent in the 12 months to July from £22.73m to £26.23m, although that was slightly flattered by the inclusion last year of the costs of coming to the market. Stripping that out, underlying prof-

its rose 15.4 per cent, with earnings per share 15.1 per cent ahead at 16.57p. The dividend is increased from 7.2p to 8.3p.

Cynics might question how a company can do so well selling furniture in the face of fragile consumer spending, still undermined by the moribund housing market. But it is hard to argue with underlying sales growth of 8 per cent and such strong cash flow that even after adding new outlets at a rate of six a year there is money left over to hand back to shareholders.

DFS reckons that, with a market share of only 8 per cent, it can continue to grow at the current rate for the next decade at least. From its current base of 32 shops, it is aiming for a chain of at least 100 strong. If it can translate its success in the Midlands and North to the South and South West of England, where it presently has no exposure at all, DFS will become a dominant force in household retailing.

Brokers are pencilling in prof-



its for the year to next July of £30m, implying earnings per share of 19p and a prospective price/earnings ratio of 18, with the shares down 8p at 345p yesterday. In the short run that appears pretty demanding, but if the growth projections are half achievable this is a share to tuck away and forget about.

Upturn hopes at WH Smith

Is sentiment at last turning in favour of WH Smith? The shares have underperformed the rest of the stock market by 35 per cent since the beginning of a very difficult year, but

yesterday saw them bounce 22p to 375p as apparent signs of a sales recovery emerged from the annual meeting.

The company said sales in the UK retail business were an "encouraging" 7.4 per cent ahead in the first quarter to 2 September. But the WH Smith retail chain, which was at the root of May's profit warning, is clearly not out of the woods yet.

The headline growth rate of 2.8 per cent at Smith looked reasonable, given that economic malaise and hot weather kept consumers out of the shops over the three summer months. However, increased spending – on advertising, promotion and improved store layouts – has only barely reversed last year's 1.3 per cent underlying fall in sales, turning it into a rather anaemic 1.4 per cent like-for-like increase in the first quarter.

Smith warned yesterday that further rationalisation will shave £20m from first half profits, leaving them "materially lower". Brokers are now looking for full year profits of

below £96m, putting the shares on a prospective multiple of 17. Smith still needs to put its long-sought after new chief executive in place to fully reverse the negative sentiment. Until then, the shares are high enough.

Bluebird sets up Disney link

Bluebird Toys has enjoyed meteoric growth on the back of its miniature characters, ranging from Mighty Max to Polly Pocket. But after a storming rise in 1993, the shares marked time last year as the stock market latched on to the risks in this branch of the toys market.

That all changed yesterday following news that Bluebird had signed a deal with Mattel, its main distributor, and Walt Disney to market a new range of miniature characters based on Mickey Mouse, Donald Duck and their extensive relations. No figures were placed on

the deal, but it does not take a lot of imagination to see that the enormous pulling power of the Disney brand could lever Bluebird on to a new plane. The shares responded accordingly, soaring 100p to 370p for a one-day rise of 37 per cent.

Followers of the company had been fretting over the rapid demise of Mighty Max, which did £46m of sales in the first two years but hit the buffers in 1993, when business is expected to slump to £9m. That will knock a sizeable hole in group turnover worth £99.4m last year, which will not be entirely made up by the launch of Mimi and the Goo Goo's, forecast to add £9m to this year's sales.

The launch next year will do nothing for 1995 profits, which if they hit £18m would put the shares on a prospective p/e of 15. But analysts expect Disney could add at least £1.5m to next year's bottom line, taking it to £24m and reducing the multiple to 11. That still looks reasonable value, particularly given that Mattel trades on around 20.

Harris unrolls carpet format

NIGEL COPE

Carpetright, the rapidly expanding carpet retailer run by former Harris Queensway chief, Sir Phil Harris, is to roll out a new format in a bid to capture 20 per cent of the UK market. The new, larger style stores are called Carpet Depot. They feature a wider range of stock and include a more upmarket range costing up to £50 a square metre and will offer interest-free credit whereas Carpetright's other stores do most of their business in cash, cheque and credit card.

The first branch opened in West Thurrock in Essex last month. A fourth opens near Edinburgh next week and the company plans a rapid expansion to a chain of 70 outlets over the next four years.

Sir Phil said: "It will meet the department stores like John Lewis head-on. It will be a low-

margin, high-volume business. It's very exciting."

However, there are concerns that the new larger stores might cannibalise the existing Carpetright outlets. Kingfisher has already found that its new Warehouse DIY stores have hit the existing branches of B&Q.

Sean Eddie, retail analyst at NatWest Securities, said: "If you put in a category killer you are clearly going to take market share. But if you are already the biggest then you are more likely to feel a disproportionate amount of pain." However Sir Phil is confident that the new stores are aiming at a different market to Carpetright.

After its flotation two years ago Carpetright has expanded to a chain of more than 200 stores. In June it reported a 40 per cent increase in profits to £20m for the year to April. The shares closed 4p lower yesterday at 342p.

COMPANY RESULTS

	Turnover £	Pre-tax £	EPS	Dividend
Barry Doherty & Noble (Q)	3.34m (4.05m)	-0.05m (0.38m)	-1.2p (4.4p)	nil (1.8p)
BDA Holdings (Q)	0.36m (0.71m)	-0.07m (-0.55m)	-0.36p (-3.01p)	nil (nil)
Blackleys (Q)	5.28m (5.24m)	-0.21m (0.11m)	-0.58p (0.32p)	nil (0.4p)
Body Shop International (Q)	105m (93.5m)	9.1m (12.3m)	2.8p (4.2p)	1.08p (0.9p)
Bridport-Quarry (Q)	26.4m (27.1m)	1.34m (0.74m)	8.64p (6.18p)	3.5p (3p)
IFS Furniture (Q)	145m (135m)	26.3m (21.4m)	16.57p (14.28p)	8.3p (7.2p)
Forest (Q)	7.69m (5.9m)	1.48m (1.13m)	4.34p (5.21p)	1.1p (1p)
Harrold Europe (Q)	22.8m (15.7m)	2.04m (1.56m)	5.3p (5.2p)	1.2p (1p)
Home Centre Retail (Q)	22.0m (20.0m)	9.3m (8.8m)	6.38p (5.40p)	3.25p (3.04p)
WMS Group (Q)	1511m (1480m)	116.2m (112.8m)	10.2p (8.7p)	2.657p (2.415p)

(Q) - Quarterly (P) - Profit (I) - Interest

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sport



The people's champion: Billy Ellison puts Red Rum through his paces on Southport sands, and Tommy Stack celebrates the horse's third Grand National triumph in 1977

Photographs: Keystone/Hulton Deutsch

The warrior who became a national treasure

Red Rum, the most celebrated jumping horse of them all, died yesterday, aged 30. In keeping with the great romance of his career and life, the horse was immediately buried at the Aintree venue he dominated for so long. When the sun shines over the winning post at the Grand National next April, the shadow should fall on the old warrior's grave.

It was Red Rum's greatest skill that he reserved his best for the race that the British public reserve as their favourite. A record of three victories, as well as two seconds, in the Grand National, delivered him a place in the common lexicon.

As a young horse Red Rum was united with one of the few personalities who could match him, Lester Piggott. "I'm very sorry to hear of his death," the recently retired jockey said. "He was a racing institution and stayed in our yard on more than one occasion when he

was down to open betting shops in the area. It's a very, very sad loss."

Red Rum it was who showed that retired racehorses did not have to shiver their lives away in the corner of a field. His exploits on the racecourse earned him almost £115,000 in first-place prize money, but he is generally thought to have added a zero to that figure with his public appearances.

Yet Red Rum should not really have jumped a fence at all. He was bred at the Rossenara Stud in Co Kilkenny to be a Flat horse as he was by the sprinter Quorum (stallion fee £198) out of a mare called Mare, who cost 240 guineas at the sales. England had yet to win the World Cup. Red Rum himself was, as a yearling, sent to Goffs Sales in Ireland, where he slipped to the ground. Few people were ever to see the horse fall again.

The gelding's early career on the Flat and then over jumps was char-

acterised more by the quantity than quality of his performances. The defining moment of his life came when he was sent to the August Doncaster Sales of 1972 and was purchased for 6,000 guineas by Donald "Ginger" McCain. The trainer bought the horse for an old owner, Noel Le Mare, a Lancashire construction engineer whose boyhood ambitions were to become a millionaire, marry a beautiful woman and win the Grand National. By the time Red Rum came into his keeping, when he was 84, he was happy he had achieved the first two objectives.

Richard Edmondson on the death of Red Rum, the horse who made magic at Aintree

The charm of McCain's yard was that it was located behind a car showroom in Southport. More pertinently for the horse, it placed him close to the sea. From a relatively early age, Red Rum had suffered from pododermatitis, a form of arthritis of the foot which usually means the guillotine for a racehorse's career. Special shoeing and drugs alleviated

the problem, but it was generally recognised that it was cured by the gelding's regular walks in the up-to-then unheralded spa waters of the Irish Sea.

The following spring Red Rum went to Aintree for the first time as one of the most improved horses in training. Oddly, considering the adulation that was to follow, he was something of an anti-hero that day as he swept past the bold, front-running but exhausted Crisp just yards from the line in a course record time.

In 1974 Red Rum was topweight and the third favourite and won again before going on to success in

the Scottish National at Ayr. For the next two years he was second, behind L'Escargot and Rag Trade, but in 1977 he was back for a fifth attempt. He won by 25 lengths and then went to celebrate with some of his supporters. "The horse was invited into a hotel in Southport," Tommy Stack, who had taken over the ride from Brian Fletcher, remembered yesterday. "He proceeded to walk up the steps and into the lobby for a drink."

That was to be Red Rum's last victory, however. The following season, as a 13-year-old, he was made hot favourite for the National but injured a heel eight days before the race. He never ran again. In all he competed 100 times over jumps, winning 24 of his starts.

The public were still able to see much of the horse at his many engagements, though, and he was routinely at the head of the Grand National parade. He missed that ap-

pointment this year, but he did make one final appearance at Aintree on 3 May, the actual date of his 30th birthday.

Red Rum was moved from the Southport base of glory to new premises at Cholmondeley, in Cheshire, five years ago and when staff arrived at his box yesterday morning they knew there would be no more parades, no more day-breaks for the old horse. He was found to be in a distressed state and the decision to have him humanely destroyed was quickly taken.

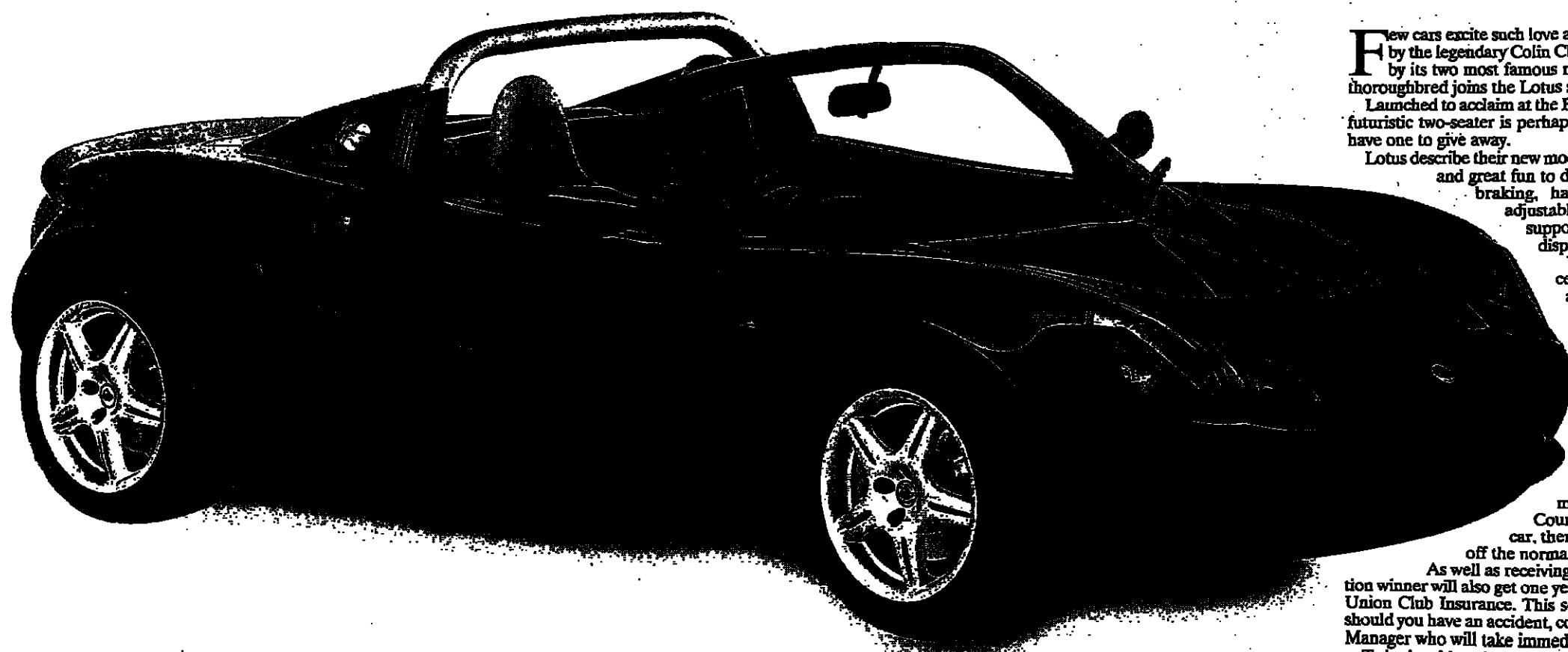
"It wasn't just his five Grand Nationals, but it was the Scottish National and he was a short-head second in the Hennessy," McCain said yesterday. "He was a tremendous old competitor, but much more than that he switched on Blackpool lights and was Chieftain of Honour at the Highland Games. He was a very remarkable horse, a seriously magical horse."

Five years that shook the racing world

1973 Grand National	1974	1975	1976	1977
1 RED RUM 9-1 R-FW	1 RED RUM 12-1	1 L'ESCARBOT 13-2	1 RAG TRADE 14-1	1 RED RUM 9-1
2 Crisp 9-1 R-FW	2 L'Escargot 17-2	2 Red Rum 7-2 R-FW	2 Red Rum 20-1	2 Chichester 20-1
3 L'Escargot 11-1	3 Charles Dickens 20-1	3 Spanish Steps 20-1	3 Eysarcher 28-1	3 Eysarcher 28-1
4 Spanish Steps 10-1	4 Spanish Steps 12-1	4 Money Market 14-1	4 Eysarcher 7-1 R-FW	4 The Piglet 40-1

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Few cars excite such love and loyalty as a Lotus. Launched in 1948 by the legendary Colin Chapman, the Lotus appeal is summed up by its two most famous marques – Esprit and Elan. Now a new thoroughbred joins the Lotus stable, the Elise.

Launched to acclaim at the Frankfurt Motor Show in September, this futuristic two-seater is perhaps their most exciting car ever – and we have one to give away.

Lotus describe their new model as "small, strong, ultra-light, very fast and great fun to drive". The low weight of 675kg benefits braking, handling and steering response. The adjustable driver's seat gives firm yet comfortable support and the minimalist instrumentation displays clear, immediate information.

Visually the car is stunning, the curvaceous lines set off by unique five-spoke alloy wheels. The light weight and aerodynamic shape makes the Elise a "green" machine, cutting down on fuel consumption and thus carbon dioxide emissions.

The 1795cc 4-cylinder fuel-injected engine delivers a top speed of around 120mph and the Elise, worth approximately £20,000, comes with catalytic converter, engine immobiliser, cloth trim and black vinyl hood.

Lotus are exhibiting the Elise at this month's Motor Show at London's Earls Court and to make it easier to view our prize car, there is a voucher on this page that gives £2 off the normal entry price of £9.

As well as receiving the keys to a Lotus Elise, our competition winner will also get one year's free insurance provided by Norwich Union Club Insurance. This service offers a 24-hour Clubline which, should you have an accident, connects you to a dedicated Club Incident Manager who will take immediate care of the problem.

To be in with a chance of winning our prize you must collect six differently numbered tokens from the 14 we are printing in the *Independent* and the *Independent on Sunday*. At least one token must come from the *Independent on Sunday*. Today we are printing Token 5 and we will print an entry form at the end of the competition.

INDEPENDENT

£2 off Adult Entry or £1 off Child/Senior Citizen Entry to the London Motor Show. This voucher entitles one person to the above discount for one day at the London Motor Show (Earls Court Exhibition Centre). Please present this voucher at the ticket office. Valid 20-29 October 1995.

THE LONDON

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RULES

1. To enter our Lotus Elise Prize Draw you need to collect 6 differently numbered tokens, including one from the *Independent on Sunday*.
2. The closing date for entries is 17 November 1995. Send to: Independent/Lotus Elise Prize Draw, PO Box 203, Welwyn Garden City, Hertfordshire AL7 1TY along with a completed entry form which will be printed on 20 and 28 October.
3. For previously published tokens or an entry form send an SAE to: Independent/Lotus Elise, PO Box 88, Welwyn Garden City, Hertfordshire

AL7 1TY. State the amount of tokens you require (only 4 per application). Please mark clearly on your envelope, Token Request or Entry Form. If you need both, please send separate SAEs. Requests must be received by first post 6 November 1995.
4. Employees and agents of Newspaper Publishing Plc or those of any other national newspaper company or any firm connected with the promotion are not eligible to take part, neither are their relatives nor members of their families or households. Entrants must be aged 18 or over.

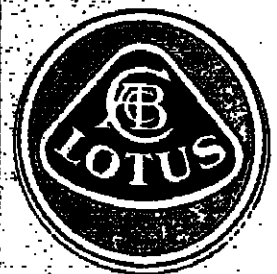
5. The Lotus Elise will be available in August 1996.
6. The winner must co-operate for publicity purposes if required and accept that his/her name and photograph will be published in the paper.
7. Photocopies of tokens and entry forms are not acceptable.
8. The promoter reserves the right in their absolute discretion to disqualify any entry or competitor, nominee, or to add to, or waive any rules.
9. No correspondence will be entered into.

Proof of postage will not be accepted as proof of receipt. The promoter will not take responsibility for entries lost or damaged in the post.
10. The competition is only open to residents of the UK and the Irish Republic. The prize will be as stated, with no cash alternative. The Editor's decision is final.
11. The year's free insurance is only available to drivers aged 25 or over and is subject to a £250 excess.
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INDEPENDENT



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sport

Illingworth might benefit from observing that mutual loyalty was a cornerstone of Ramsey's relationship with his players

On the journey to South Africa yesterday Michael Atherton had plenty of time to reflect upon a break with tradition unthinkable certainly when England's cricketers were led into the field by autocratic amateurs.

In a week that sees the centenary of W G Grace's death, it can be imagined that the good doctor would have been outraged by the very idea of conceding authority in selection to a team manager, not even one in possession of a dukedom.

As this became an important condition of Atherton's reappointment as captain and he has not always been on the same wavelength as Raymond Illingworth, it will be interesting to see how the arrange-

ment works out should the manager find himself alongside Terry Venables in the tabloid shooting gallery.

That probability aside, doubtless there was a disturbance in the minds of many diehards when Illingworth assumed the autonomy granted reluctantly to Alf Ramsey by the Football Association in order to secure his services as manager of the England team.

Where his predecessor, Walter Winterbottom, a kindly academic, had accepted the difficulties imposed by a selection committee, often conceding to ludicrous regional bias, Ramsey demanded absolute independence; his policies, his team. "I suppose I'd better inform those people," he said typically one day in

the West of Scotland, making off towards a group of powerless senior officials with belated word of the team he had picked.

Some within the FA found this intolerable and the grudge they bore against Ramsey was evident in his downfall. The fated hero of 1966 was fired six months after failing to qualify England for the 1974 World Cup finals in West Germany.

In Illingworth's own dialect, that is something for him to think on about. Atherton will have some input in selection but the teams he leads in South Africa will be Illingworth's. No matter what mistakes Atherton makes on the field ultimate responsibility will rest with the manager. The impression Illingworth



KEN JONES

creates is one of stubborn single mindedness, a man not given to prevarication. I don't know how close this is to truth, but from now on there will be no getting away from it. If results on tour again fall short

of expectations, critics will know where to look for a scapegoat.

Throughout a closely contested series against the West Indies last summer, it could be assumed that despite being of different generations and thus of conflicting attitudes, Illingworth and Atherton had at last established a sound, working relationship.

However, this week has seen Illingworth occupied by conversations with Geoffrey Boycott in the Sun newspaper that have touched upon differences with Atherton over matters of selection. A personal suspicion is that the England captain may have found this more than just slightly irritating.

We are speaking about different

games, different policies and eras, but Illingworth might benefit from observing that absolute mutual loyalty was a cornerstone of Ramsey's famously successful relationship with his players; for example, early personal differences with England's captain, Bobby Moore, were never given a public airing.

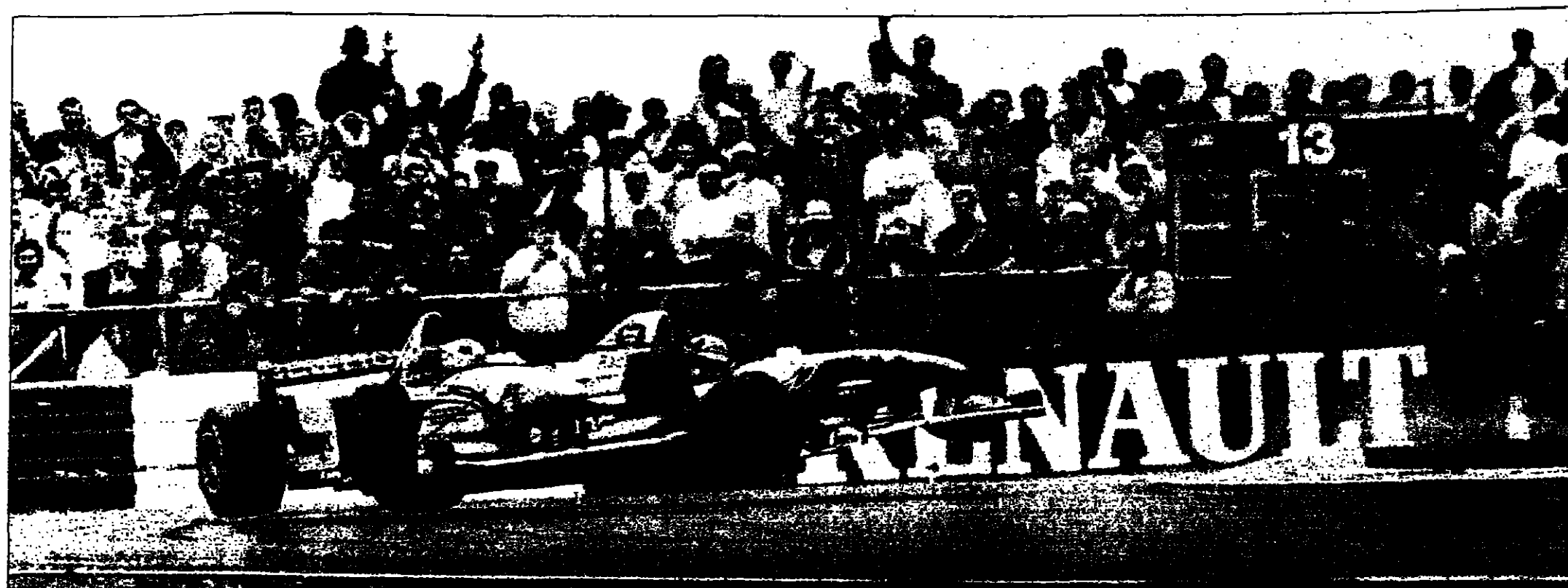
It is not a habit of this column to swerve away from the central theme but an exception can be made in the case of Hugh McLivney, whose stature in sportswriting is recognised internationally.

Great performers of the turf, horses, jockeys and trainers have never been better described than they are in McLivney's brilliant collection of racing pieces (McLivney

on Horseracing, Mainstream Publishing, £14.99).

Of particular poignancy is an interview with Jonjo O'Neill who recorded one of the greatest victories ever seen at Cheltenham when he brought Dawn Run home in the 1986 Gold Cup. Just a few months later Dawn Run died following a fall in France and Jonjo was beginning a battle against cancer. "I can see every grasshopper in the grass," he roared.

One of many experiences in McLivney's company concerns another disastrous day in the Cotswolds. In a desperate attempt to ease the pain we tried to strike a bet on Liverpool in the European Cup. "Game's already over," came the reply. Some experts!



Magnificent men in their flying machines: Michael Schumacher (left) and Damon Hill collide in this season's British Grand Prix at Silverstone

Photograph: Dale Cherry

How racing relies on basic instinct

The championship may seem all but over mathematically, but there is much that Damon Hill can retrieve from the three remaining races to enhance his prospects for next season.

Starting with Sunday's Pacific Grand Prix and on through Suzuka to Adelaide, Damon has the opportunity to dominate his team, Williams-Renault, and lay the foundations for 1996.

It is not yet over this season, of course, and in our game anything can happen. It is, for instance, possible for a driver to be deducted points for a breach of regulations. But Damon would need that kind of assistance — or snookers — to stop Michael Schumacher winning his second title.

The important thing for Damon is to impose himself on proceedings. He has made a couple of clumsy mistakes of late, which have left him out of touch with Michael and portrayed him as a not partic-

ularly great racer, and that is probably not so.

Damon has a strong view of things, but some of the aggression he has encountered recently should not have been acceptable under the over-taking regulations, and all drivers may shortly have the further clarification he seeks on this issue.

However, I feel strongly that when you are rushing into a corner at over 190mph and you are in close company, anything you do has to be instinctive. Everything happens incredibly quickly. There is no logical thought process. You can't be running through a series of regulations. It is called motor racing.

It is also going to end up being aggressive. That is an essential ingredient. It always has been, and it is what people want. You think back, for example, to Nigel Mansell's manoeuvre in beating Nelson Piquet in the 1987 British Grand Prix. It was breathtaking and had it gone wrong, the

Martin Brundle (right), Britain's most experienced current Formula One driver, assesses why Michael Schumacher is poised to claim a second championship and how Damon Hill can strengthen his challenge for the title next year



result would have been terrifying. Piquet left Mansell one car's width going into a 150mph corner, and Mansell went for it and made it.

That is what it is all about. If you want to overtake, you know the other guy is going to make it hard for you, and you may have to come up with something special. You have got to be positive, just as in other sports. A half-hearted tackle in football can hurt you.

Treading gingerly in a Formula One car is not motor racing. Yes, there are times when we all overstep the mark and there will be mishaps. But basically, instinctively, we know what is acceptable, what

is avoidable, and what is dangerous, and we should race accordingly. Schumacher has that instinct; he knows when and how to overtake. In wheel-to-wheel combat, Michael has been better than Damon.

Michael is on the verge of winning the championship again because he has the physical fitness and the mental faculty to drive flat-out for the entire race when his car is not necessarily the best. When the pressure is on, his confidence stays intact.

What must also be said is that Schumacher's team, Benetton-Renault, have pulled some very smart moves in terms of their strategy against

Williams. There has been a great team effort behind Michael's driving.

It is difficult to know if anyone could have done better than Damon has, given his equipment, although when you compare Jean-Christophe Boullion's times in testing for Williams and then racing for Sauber-Ford, you have to conclude the Williams is a very special car.

Damon has, in fairness, established himself as the only consistent challenger to Schumacher over the past two seasons, and I believe he is right when he says a team has to have a designated No 1 driver to win the championship.

You need two strong drivers and cars to win the constructors' championship, but you need to focus on one man to win the drivers' title. Schumacher has enjoyed that situation at Benetton and it has paid off.

You can achieve No 1 status by dominating the team and producing the performances. Damon has not done that of late alongside David Coulthard, and he has to do it next year with Jacques Villeneuve. I happen to think Damon will find it easier to do that with Villeneuve.

Michael has demonstrated he can be put into virtually any car and win a grand prix, but switching from Benetton to Ferrari will have its difficulties — after all, he is leaving behind his family.

I was a little surprised to hear him suggest he had his sights on the championship in 1997 rather than 1996, because he felt Williams would have the upper hand next year. That is either a con, or — for the

first time — he has a few doubts in the back of his mind.

I think he has some concerns. Ferrari have a lot to do, they are developing a V10 engine, he has to get to know the engineers, and so on. But Michael's confidence is supreme and I don't see him having a great problem there. He will win races in a Ferrari.

There will also be a lot of motivation at Benetton to win races. The team will want to show their success has not all been down to Schumacher, that they have a lot of talented people there. Jean Alesi and Gerhard Berger will also be keen to prove Ferrari have been holding them back.

I believe Formula One has had much to offer this season and that next season it could have even more on offer. Damon can effectively set his campaign in motion over the last three races of this season by resuming wheel-to-wheel combat with Schumacher, and making his presence felt on and off the track.

Houston Rockets lift off

Basketball
DUNCAN HOOPER

Just two years ago the highlight of their schedule was a trip down the M1 to face Crystal Palace. Today, Sheffield Sharks line up alongside the Houston Rockets and the champions of Italy, Spain, Israel and Australia in the McDonald's Championship, the glitziest tournament any English club has played in.

According to Jim Brandon, the American coach of the Budweiser League champions, it does not stop there. "This is the biggest tournament any Spanish, Italian, Israeli or Australian club has played in as well," he said. "Outside of the NBA finals, this is the greatest club basketball tournament in the world."

Earlier this week, the NBA hit town and transformed London Arena for the three-day event, boosting capacity by 20 per cent to 10,500, with extra seating for the London Docklands venue. "I'm not sure English fans realise what this means to have the event here," Brandon said. "The sport has to utilise this weekend for all its worth so that we can look back on the McDonald's as the start of a real move forward for UK basketball."

NBA teams have won all six previous McDonald's, but this is the first time six champion clubs have competed. The Rockets are the first reigning NBA champions to take part, and the likely absence from court of the injured 7ft 4in Hakeem Olajuwon should give this year's event a slightly more competitive edge.

Olajuwon, however, disagrees. Even if he doesn't play, he does not rate the chances of Houston's opponents and says: "The rest of world basketball won't catch up with us in my lifetime."

Brandon's team, who tuned up with a 97-61 win over Hemel Royals on Tuesday, take a slight step up in class tonight for their first game against the European champions, Real Madrid.

The Sharks need no motivation after losing by just 13 points on aggregate to the Spaniards in the European Clubs' Championship this month. "It couldn't be a better start for us because my players are obsessed with setting the score against Madrid," Brandon said. "If Madrid don't play well they'll lose."

Sheffield would then have another mountain to climb in tomorrow's semi-final against the winners from tonight's game between Italy's Basket Bologna and Israel's Maccabi Tel Aviv. In tomorrow's other semi-final, Houston play the Australian champions, Perth Wildcats.

Tour to take Indurain near home town

Cycling

Miguel Indurain, the winner of the last five Tours de France, will be able to visit his home town during next year's race. The route for the 1996 race, announced yesterday, starts in the Netherlands, goes through Belgium and then loops clockwise around France with a small excursion to Pamplona, Spain, near Indurain's home.

The race, which starts on 29 June, covers around 2,385 miles, ending at the Champs Elysees on 21 July. There are 21 stages with a prologue and a rest day.

The annual award for the best young rider in the Tour will be named after Fabio Casarilli, the Italian rider for the Motorola team who died in a crash on a descent in the Pyrenees.

The Tour will end a week earlier than usual because of the Olympics. That will allow time for the cyclists to make their way to Atlanta, where professionals will compete for the first time.

Tour route, Sporting Digest, page 31

Indians come good to make World Series

Baseball

RUPERT CORNWELL
reports from Washington

For decades there have been the emblem of bad baseball, on the cinema screen and in real life. But finally the Cleveland Indians have put their woebegone past behind them, crushing the Seattle Mariners to win the American League pennant and return to the World Series for the first time since 1954.

Their fourth and clinching win in the best of seven championship series could not have been more emphatic, a 4-0 shut out before 59,000 silenced fans in the Mariners' own Kingdome on Tuesday night, at the expense of Randy Johnson, Seattle's previously invincible pitching ace.

Three times in the play-offs, Johnson's murderous fast-balls and wicked sliders had saved the Mariners in crucial games. But this time the 6ft 10in left-hander ran out of miracles. When he stalked disconsolately off the mound after giving up three runs at the bottom of the eighth inning, the last of them a rocketing home run to straightaway centre by Carlos Baerga, Seattle's dream was done.

"The people of Cleveland have suffered long," the Indians manager, Mike Hargrove, said, waxing headily poetic in a champagne-drenched Cleveland dressing room. "I wondered if this was really

happening, to me Mike Hargrove and to the Cleveland Indians. But then I looked over at Dennis and knew it was so."

That "Dennis" was Dennis Martinez, the evening's greatest hero. In the end, Cleveland prevailed not thanks to their redoubtable hitters — comparatively subdued throughout the AL championship series — but to the steady and relentless pitching of two of the craftiest veterans around: the 37-year-old Orel Hershiser, who won games two and five with performances as peerless as when he led the Los Angeles Dodgers to World Series victory in 1988, and Martinez, at 40 one of his sport's truly ancient monuments.

In his native Nicaragua, which follows his fortunes avidly, they call him "El Presidente", despite a chequered career which included a long bout with alcoholism. Now, after an immaculate seven innings in which he bested none other than Johnson, Martinez is the uncrowned king of Cleveland. Placing his pitches to perfection, he tied the Mariner's normally potent hitters in knots. "This one was for old guys all over the world," Martinez said. "After all I've been through in my career, finally I did something we can all remember."

Thus the Indians go on to a World Series against the Atlanta Braves that neutrals have been hoping for all season. It will be a feast of political incorrectness,

pitting Cleveland's "Tribe" and its tom-tom pounding fans and their mascot, Chief Wahoo, against the Braves, propelled to the baseball's grand finale by an army of war-whooping supporters whose trademark is the tomahawk chant. Far more important, it pits the two best teams in baseball.

In the National League series the Braves simply shut down the fancied Cincinnati Reds, limiting them to just five runs in four games. The World Series, which starts on Saturday in Atlanta's Fulton County Stadium, will be a competition between two crushing winners of expectation.

Series runners-up to Minnesota in 1991 and Toronto in 1992, and NL division winners in 1993, the Braves justifiably consider themselves the best club of the 1990s never to have won the world championship. But after more than 40 years in the wilderness, the Indians reckon that history owes them — and the resurgent rust-belt city they come from — even more.

That is what Bob Feller believes: "We've got great pitching, terrific hitting and good management, just watch and we'll wind up world champions." And Feller, whose statue is outside the brand new ballpark in Cleveland, should know. He was the Indians' pitching ace back in 1948, the last time Cleveland won the World Series. Their victims then? The then Boston, now Atlanta, Braves.

Sports Letters

Flaws to be found in the offside law

From R Phillips

Sir: Further to Steve Bale's commentary on last Saturday's Wasps-Bath encounter illustrating the negative blight that is still apparent in our game, I would like to question the complete lack of control of the offside law by officials so far this season.

The persistent flouting of the offside law in rugby, and the offside law in football, while at the same time an expansive and adventurous approach in the Southern Hemisphere is funding the new professional era. Why not really open the game by extending the offside law to 10 metres behind the scrum?

Yours sincerely
ROBERT PHILLIPS
Redland, Bristol

Assault and flattery

Sir: The Independent is to be congratulated for giving front page cover to the jailing of Duncan Ferguson for his assault of a fellow professional on the field of play.

Because of his activities off the field, I was surprised that Rangers signed him in the first place. Ferguson is also not a good example for the Everton manager, Joe Royle, to offer as a hero to all the young Everton supporters.

Yours faithfully
ARCHIE LESLIE
Maltby, Rotham.

Letters should be marked "For publication" and should contain daytime and evening telephone numbers. They should be sent to Sports Editor, The Independent, 1 Canalside Square, London E14 6SL. They may be shortened for reasons of space.

Paul the happy hooker

Rugby League
DAVE HADFIELD

The hooker has officially become an endangered species with the news that both sides will go into the second semi-final of the Centenary World Cup without a specialist in the position.

Wigan's Henry Paul will play hooker for the first time in his senior career for New Zealand at Huddersfield on Sunday, against Australia's Andrew Johns, who has played there just once. Paul, who has played virtually all his rugby in the backs, is drafted into the position vacated by the drug-testing casualty, Syd Eru, in preference to Gary Freeman, who played there in New Zealand's final group match against Papua New Guinea.

The New Zealand coach, Frank Endacott, has made other changes in an attempt to find

the elusive blend that would unlock his side's potential. Back into the starting line-up come Kevin Iro and Richard Barnett, with Tony Kemp switching from loose forward to stand-off.

There is also a first appearance in the tournament at Huddersfield for the Kiwi vice-captain, John Lomax, who missed the first match through suspension and the second with a back injury. As expected, the side's skipper, Matthew Ridge, is fit to lead them, despite the recurrence of a rib injury against PNG.

The Australia coach, Bob Fulton, had two specialist hookers available in Wayne Barritt and Aaron Raper, but opts instead for Johns, a half-back and goal-kicker who did a sound job there against Fiji on Saturday.

The other adjustments to the side, compared with the one beaten by England in the opening match of the tournament,

see Brett Dallas replace John Hopoate on the wing and Gary Larson come into the pack for David Gillespie.

Larson, the North Sydney second-row, missed the start of the World Cup because of his wife's pregnancy, but has won a place in the starting line-up. David Gillespie, who injured his hamstring at Wembley, is one of five players bracketed for the four substitutes' spots.

AUSTRALIA (v New Zealand, World Cup semi-final, Wigan, Saturday, 11.30pm): Test, McIlwain (Sydney), Huddersfield, Sanday; Barritt (Sydney), Tait (Sydney), Biddis (Sydney), Hill (Sydney), Coyne (Sydney), Williams (Sydney), Fitter (Perth), Capi (Newcastle), Pety (Sydney), Biddis, A. Johns (Newcastle), Carroll (Wigan), Munnies (Marine), Lomax (North Sydney), Bennett (Sydney), Substitutes: Barritt (Sydney), Gillespie (Marine), O'Brien (Newcastle), Smith (Sydney), M. Johns (Newcastle), Keen (Marine).

NEW ZEALAND: Ridge (Wigan), Capi (Hull), Iro (London), Barrett (Cornwall), Kemp (Leeds), Johns (Auckland), Lomax (Cardiff), Paul (Wigan), Lomax (Sydney City), Kearney (Auckland), Panga (Cardiff), Hore (Sydney), Substitutes: Ngata (Auckland), O'Brien (Auckland), Wild (Cardiff), T. Iro (Sydney City).

'Battle of Britain' proves a sell-out

A capacity crowd of almost 31,000 will see Saturday's World Cup semi-final showdown between England and Wales at Old Trafford.

All 30,945 tickets have been snapped up for the game which is being dubbed "The Battle of Britain", and it looks increasingly likely that Sunday's second semi-final at Huddersfield's McAlpine Stadium between Australia and New Zealand will be a 19,000 sell-out.

"Obviously we are delighted, but we are not surprised," said Maurice Lindsay, the tournament director. "The whole competition has been magnificently supported. We expect to have 10,000 Welsh fans at Old Trafford, so there should be a tremendous atmosphere for what should be a terrific clash."

Two sell-outs over the weekend will take the aggregate attendance for the first 14 Centenary World Cup matches to more than 200,000, with a large attendance anticipated for the final at Wembley a week on Saturday.

The tournament has had a worldwide television audience of around 370 million, and attendances for the Emerging Nations competition have also been encouraging.

Although a crowd of more than 35,000 watched Saturday's Manchester football derby between United and City, Old Trafford's redevelopment plans have restricted the use of the North Stand for the semi-final.

However, those unable to get tickets will not miss out as both semi-finals are being televised live by the BBC.

England's build-up to Test in chaos

Rugby Union
STEVE BALE

England's preparations for the Test against the World Cup holders, South Africa, at Twickenham on 18 November are in a state of chaos after squad training sessions which were as notable for parades of walking wounded as for the work that was done.

The regular get-togethers at Marlow seemed a good idea at the time they were conceived last season in the long build-up to the World Cup. But now, though there is no evidence of malingering, they appear to be following the pattern of the old trial matches: good ones to miss.

This season's second session took place on Tuesday. "It was bad last time and it's worse this

time," Jack Rowell, the England manager, said. "I've said to the players that if, the week before we play South Africa, we are in this state, we'll have serious problems."

"We are not being able to prepare properly. They have great loyalty to their clubs and they play with niggly injuries which become chronic."

This week at Marlow the top sheet of Rowell's instruc-

tional flip-chart listed nine injured squad members in addition to Tony Underwood - Bracken, Catt, Johnson, Leonard, Mensah, Ojomoh, Pears, Shaw and West - and when Ian Hunter had not arrived by the start of training Rowell indicated he was now considering playing a centre, Damian Hopley, on the wing against the Springboks.

In other circumstances the

manager would have asked, or possibly demanded, that his players be excused the pre-Springbok round of Courage Championship fixtures on 11 November but instead he is reluctantly allowing them to play because the South African game was not on the original schedule.

This makes it no less frustrating when Rowell knows the Springboks will have had a

month since the end of their domestic season in which to rest and get ready. "You can imagine how supercharged South Africa are going to be," he said. "Last season we asked players to rest before internationals and it paid off. This time I said we wouldn't because this game came out of the blue, but in reality I'd love to."

Rowell temporarily added Paul Grayson, Neil McCarthy,

Andy Mullins and John Fowler to make up for the injured shortfall but belatedly decided against adding Andy Robinson, this season's outstanding English open-side flanker, who thereby may well have been saved a wasted journey. "I told him we would leave it this week but when selection became imminent he would be very much at the forefront of our consideration," Rowell said.

Sean Fitzpatrick, the All Blacks captain, will miss the first game of the tour of Italy and France - against Italy B next Wednesday - after being suspended for eight days for throwing a punch in last Saturday's New Zealand Championship final between Auckland and Otago. Stuart Forster has replaced the injured scrum-half, Junior Tonga, in the tour party.



Cleveland's third baseman, Alvaro Espinoza (right) slides in to score the Indians' first run in their 4-0 victory over the Seattle Mariners which took them through to baseball's World Series, where they will meet the Atlanta Braves. Photograph: Reuters

Pantani breaks leg in collision

Cycling

Italy's Marco Pantani, the bronze medalist at the recent World Championships, was taken to hospital with a broken leg yesterday after colliding with a vehicle during the Milan-Turin race.

Pantani, affectionately dubbed "Little Elephant" by Italian fans because of his bald head and large ears, was in a pack chasing the leaders on a fast downhill stretch when the accident happened.

Observers said that as the riders came out of a bend they hit a four-wheel drive vehicle emerging from a side road. The Italian riders Davide Dall'Oglio and Francesco Secchiari suffered minor injuries in the accident.

Pantani, who missed the Giro d'Italia last year after hitting a car in a training accident in May, was a stage winner in the mountains during the last Tour de

France. Doctors said the rider would undergo surgery for an exposed break of the tibia and fibula of his left leg. He also suffered minor injuries to his chin and collar-bone.

The 206-km race was won by Italy's Stefano Zanini in 4hr 54min 24sec, ahead of Denmark's Rolf Sørensen and Italy's Francesco Casagrande. Jeannie Longo, of France, aborted her attempt to regain the world one-hour track record after less than 16 minutes in Bogota because the conditions were too windy.

She was attempting to beat the 47.411km record set by Britain's Yvonne McGregor in Manchester in June this year, but after covering nearly 13km in 15min 55sec at the Luis Carlos Galan Sarmiento Velodrome, Longo pulled up. She held the one-hour record from October 1989 until April this year with 46.352km, which she set in Mexico City.

Tour de France, page 30

Domi suspended for unprovoked attack

Ice hockey

The National Hockey League has suspended the Toronto Maple Leafs forward, Tie Domi, for eight games after he launched an unprovoked attack on the New York Rangers defenceman, Ulf Samuelsson, during a game on Saturday night.

Domi also was fined the maximum \$1,000 (\$650) allowable.

Domi, who said that he had been goaded by the player, knocked out Samuelsson with a left hook to the jaw in the closing minutes of Saturday's 2-0 win by the Rangers. Samuelsson lay unconscious for about five minutes and a stretcher was brought to the ice, although he managed to leave the rink unassisted before having stitches in the back of his head.

"Mr Domi's actions were deliberate, premeditated and clearly administered with the intent to injure his opponent," said Brian Burke, the NHL director of hockey operations.

"The fact that Mr Samuelsson was unable to defend himself as he was looking away from his opponent also was a factor in my decision. While Mr Samuelsson verbally challenged Mr Domi prior to the punch, verbal taunting by an opponent does not justify this type of conduct."

Domi is eligible to return on 3 November for the Leafs' game against Vancouver. Samuelsson, who was diagnosed as suffering from concussion, did not play in the Rangers' 7-5 defeat by Hartford on Monday night.

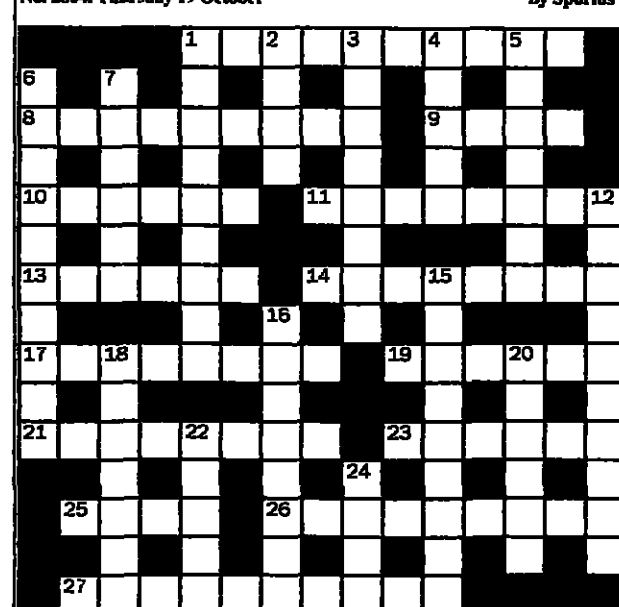
Results, Sporting Digest, page 31

THE INDEPENDENT CROSSWORD

No. 2804, Thursday 19 October

By Spieris

Wednesday's solution



STATUE WEAKNESS
SUPERSTITION LOOP
EASTERN DANUBE
ORDER INMATELY
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OVERLAPPING
ASTERN ABRASION
Y D I T L C
DASH ALLEGANCE
THE ROYALTY
BETRAYED THEORY

- ACROSS**
- Proof, but not in relation to spirit? (10)
 - Fellow is entertaining reference with story involving brilliant wingers (9)
 - Time to copy video, perhaps (4)
 - Tool for those working at a trade? (6)
 - Hence a certain sort of mist can produce a plant disease (8)
 - Have one's ups and downs in the first set? (6)
 - State of readiness indicated by dealer about to import article from Bordeaux (3,5)
 - Menacing explosive device netted by Merchant Navy - it's outside (8)
 - Card-playing group in train (6)
 - Painful disorder restricting a Dutch sailor, no stay-at-home by nature (8)
 - Girl won't take part in disputes about arrangements (3,3)
 - Contented women should give an opinion (4)
 - Agribusiness with branch taking Friday off, initially (5,4)
 - Extend area covered by new gas reading scheme (10)

- DOWN**
- Like the majority of the Government? (5,4)
 - Holiday in the fall (4)
 - Withdrawn and kept on one side? (8)
 - Jazz number you can get up in a fortnight (5)
 - Old soldier, man entrusted with operation, literally? (7)
 - Bad golf shots can be disconcerting (3,7)
 - Vainly aspire to sing? (6)
 - Game cooked in omelettes with a hint of mushroom (10)
 - Original character in radio soap, endlessly kind? (9)
 - Relieve peacekeeping force that's burned out (8)
 - Descriptive of a crowd amounting to total number in China, we hear? (7)
 - Eyesight's funny, beginning to fail (6)
 - Hat left out in shady part of garden (5)
 - Sound system we'll get in March if interest's reduced (2,2)

Atherton feeling positive

Cricket

Mike Atherton led England's team off to South Africa last night, delighted with the way his management relationship with Ray Illingworth is going - and not a bit perturbed by Lily's insistence on being totally in charge.

England's battle-hardened captain, his batteries recharged after a month's rest, spoke of how much he was looking forward to the historic 14-week tour, England's first to South Africa for 30 years.

And, before boarding the flight to Johannesburg from Heathrow, Atherton said: "Raymond has been given a particular job by the Test and County Cricket Board and he wants to have the last say. I'm happy for it to be that way, but I don't think he's going to ignore whatever I have to say."

"I've had a lot of input dur-

ing the summer and I think we have both learnt things. In fact, as far as selection of the team is concerned, I don't think there will be any real change compared to previous tours, even though Ray will make any final decisions."

"Our relationship has progressed to a level where we get on extremely well - but the most important thing is how it works within the England team. I felt during the summer that the players were very happy with the way things were going and it makes a lot of sense for Ray to be with the team this winter as manager for 100 per cent of the time."

"There will be no lack of communication, nor will there be anything misconstrued - as possibly happened last winter. I like to have someone around to talk tactics, both during and between matches - it will be nice to have Ray around for the whole tour."

Atherton said he felt the five-Test series will be very sim-

ilar in style to this summer's contest with the West Indies. He said: "It will be dominated by pace, but we have the batsman who can handle that. We have a lot of really good players of quick bowling, as we showed against the West Indies, so we will have no fears on that score."

"My real hope is that we get more luck than in previous years with injuries, and that especially our three quickest bowlers - Devon Malcolm, Dominic Cork and Darren Gough - stay fit."

"I hope the South Africans remember Devon from when he took nine wickets against them at The Oval - and it's up to Devon to reproduce that form."

"All our players are confident that we can beat South Africa, but we must keep playing the sort of cricket that we produced this summer. In the past our away form has been poor. We've got to change that."

Kumble milestone, page 31

O'Sullivan's misery continues

Snooker

Ronnie O'Sullivan suffered a first-round defeat for the second world-ranking event in succession at the Skoda Grand Prix in Sunderland yesterday.

The former UK champion, who also failed to clear the opening hurdle in the recent Thailand Classic, crashed out 5-2 to Portadown's Michael Duffy in the biggest upset of the season so far.

"It's a big disappointment because I have been working really hard on my game and practising more than I have in a very long time," said the world No 3 from Essex, whose well-documented family problems appear to be having an adverse effect on him.

O'Sullivan, taking some

risky pots which Duffy described as "mad", fell 2-1 behind and also trailed 36-0 in the fourth frame before briefly coming to life. The 19-year-old constructed a superb 102 clearance to draw level at 2-2 and it looked like he had weathered the storm.

But Duffy, whose only other significant achievement in three years as a professional was to record a victory over Alex Higgins, regained the lead by winning the scrappy fifth frame on the blue. After that, Duffy pulled away with breaks of 35 and 43.

"Ronnie played well in patches, but he didn't seem to be concentrating 100 per cent, and you could tell he wasn't totally with it," Duffy said.

Duffy goes forward to meet fellow Ulsterman Joe Swail, who maintained his solid start

to the season by beating Scunthorpe's Jeff Cundy 5-3.

For the second day in a row, a player from Grimsby left the table visibly upset with his opponent. On Tuesday, Mike Hallett was annoyed about a free-ball decision during the deciding frame of his 5-4 defeat by Neal Foulds. Yesterday, it was Dean Reynolds who expressed disgust at the slow play of Mark Flowerdew, who finally beat him 5-3 after a 4hr 21min marathon.

"It was ridiculous," Reynolds said. "Referees should do something about the speed of play and intervene. Throughout my career I have never come across a slower player than him. It was a joke and it didn't do the game any favours."

Results, Sporting Digest, page 31

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